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Inter-Arab Affairs

GCC Military Officers To Meet 27 Aug

LD2608142391 London KUNA in Arabic 1112 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Muscat, 26 Aug (KUNA)—Chiefs of staff of the Armed Forces of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member states will hold an extraordinary meeting tomorrow in Muscat. The two-day meeting will discuss how to strengthen cooperation and coordination in various military fields in a way that would guarantee the stability of the six Council states' security. A GCC general secretariat delegation, led by Major General Yusif Muhammad al-Madani, chairman of the military committee at the secretariat, arrived here last night and today began to make arrangements for convening the extraordinary meeting.

'Abd-al-Majid Urges Attendance at 10 Sep Meeting

NC2508205291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2010 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Aug (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid emphasized that the Arab foreign ministers' participation in the 10 September Arab League council meeting is "important" and is dictated by current Arab and international circumstances.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid urged the Arab foreign ministers to participate in the meeting, saying that he sent letters to the ministers outlining the importance of their parcipation in the meeting.

In a statement issued after meeting with the Arab states' permanent delegates to the Arab League this evening, Dr. 'Abd-al- Majid said that the meeting's purpose was to view the agenda of the Arab League's 96th session, slated for 10 September, which includes several political, economic, and social matters. [passage omitted]

Arab League Chief Calls for Aid to Somalia

NC2608124391 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid issued an urgent appeal to all Arab and friendly governments to extend immediate assistance to Somalia, a country which is facing famine and suffers shortages of food and medicine. 'Abd-al-Majid said the Arab League warns of an awesome catastrophe in Somalia and calls for concerted Arab efforts to save the Somalian people. The Arab League, he added, calls on Somalians to stop the bloody strife that is sapping the country's resources and harming its security and stability. 'Abd-al-Majid said Somalia's stability is important to the entire region.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat To Head Group at Arab League Meeting

JN2608134091 Baghdad INA in English 1215 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Tunis, Aug. 26, INA—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will lead the Palestinian delegation to the ministerial meetings of the Arab League due in Cairo on 10 September, according to informed Palestinian sources.

The sources said that Mr. 'Arafat wants to discuss the form of the Palestinian participation in the proposed peace conference next October with the Arab foreign ministers.

Meanwhile, observers are of the opinion that 'Arafat and PLO officials endeavour to open new channels for dialogue and communications with the capitals directly linked with the process of peace for the purpose of crystallizing a firm position toward participation in the conference in accordance with the Palestinian viewpoints.

'Arafat, Special UN Regional Envoy Confer

JN2608172191 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, has received (Edward Bernard), special representative of the UN secretary general for the Far East. The meeting centered on current developments in the region, the possibility of convening a peace conference, and the role the United Nations can play. They also discussed developments in the occupied Palestinian territories in light of Israel's escalating policy to quell our people's intifadah.

Brother Abu-'Ammar concentrated on the possibility of a positive role for the United Nations in the peace process to enable the Palestinian people to regain their inalienable national rights.

Hamas, PLO Officials Discuss PNC Participation

NC2608182191 Paris AFP in English 1751 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Amman, Aug 26 (AFP)—Officials from the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Islamic resistance movement Hamas, active in the Israeli-occupied territories, met here Monday to discuss the movement's participation in a meeting next month of the Palestinian parliament-in-exile.

Ibrahim Ghawshah, head of the Hamas delegation, said before the meeting that Hamas was seeking 40 per cent of the seats in the Palestine National Council [PNC] but would make concessions on the demand in return for PLO backing of United Nations-sponsored elections in the occupied territories.

He stressed that the PLO "must begin contacts at the Islamic and international level in order to secure the organization of such elections."

Ghawshah met with three members of the PLO, Hani al-Hasan of the Fatah faction, Salih Ra'fat of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Abu-'Ali Mustafa of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

A meeting of the 490-member Palestine National Council is scheduled for Algiers in mid-September.

Further on Talks

JN2708072491 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 27 Aug 91 pp 1, 16

[By Wafa' 'Amr]

[Text] AL-DUSTUR—Talks between the PLO delegation and representatives of the Islamic Resistence Movement, Hamas, started yesterday evening on forming the new Palestine National Council [PNC] with Hamas' participation.

PLO Executive Committee Member Abu-'Ali Mustafa led the PLO delegation while Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah led the Hamas delegation.

The talks are a continuation of the preparatory meetings held between the two sides last year when Hamas submitted a memorandum calling for holding elections for the PNC and for the movement to have at least 40 percent of the seats in it.

Mr. Saji Salamah, member of the PLO delegation to the talks with Hamas, said the preparatory committee for forming the new PNC discussed the Hamas memorandum and informed the movement of its position on it, and that what was mentioned in it was positive. He pointed out that the committee decided to continue dialogue with Hamas and called on it to attend the meetings of the preparatory committee to form the PNC.

He added that Hamas believes that its conditions for attending the meeting in Tunis have not been met.

He said that the committee had decided to reopen dialogue with Hamas since the Palestinian stand needs the efforts of all Palestinian factions, which must, undoubtedly, take part in the PNC.

Mr. Salamah added that meetings with Hamas were not stopped either outside or inside [the occupied Arab territories]. He affirmed that the movement has influence which no one can ignore and that meeting with it expresses the PLO's interest and determination to bolster the unity of the Palestinian people, including all their forces and political trends.

Hamas representative Ibrahim Ghawshah said the movement participated in talks with the PLO with an open heart and mind in order to present the movement's political, militant, and strategic visions. This is a serious attempt to convince the PLO of the Hamas' strategy and beliefs through more talks and attempts at persuasion, especially since the movement believes it necessary that the Palestinian people should agree on common denominators in their struggle against the Jewish state. He affirmed that one of Hamas' most important strategic pillars is not to abandon one inch of Palestinian territories.

Hungarian Minister Stresses Palestinian Rights

JN2608173991 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Hungarian Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Geza Jeszenszky has stressed his country's firm support for the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state.

In an exclusive statement to the PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, he said that the issue of Palestinian representation must not constitute an obstacle to the international Middle East peace conference scheduled for October. The Hungarian minister said that Palestinian representation is an affair of the Palestinian people, who have the right to choose their own legitimate representatives.

He affirmed that Hungary is eager to promote friendly relations between the Hungarian and Palestinian peoples. He also promised to promote these relations to serve both sides as well as peace in the Middle East. Jeszenszky participated with the Austrian foreign minister in the inauguration of a monument for the collapse of the iron curtain between the two countries in August, 1980.

Media 'Distort' Palestinian Views on USSR Coup

TA2608151591 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 26 Aug 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Soviets Have Our Support"]

[Text] Palestinians as well as other nations followed the news on the developments in the Soviet Union last week very closely. Not only because the Soviet Union has been a close friend of the Palestinian people and a sincere supporter of their cause, but also because developments in the superpower country affect the political process in our region and world peace. It is clear to the Palestinians that a Soviet Union which is stable and strong politically, economically and militarily is important for the sake of maintaining peace in a world still dominated by powers ready to bypass all international laws and human rights in order to achieve their own selfish goals.

While they were curious to follow the latest developments in the Soviet Union, Palestinians asserted that they considered the issue to be an internal Soviet issue, and that they hoped this friendly country would overcome its crisis swiftly and easily without bloodshed so that the Soviet Union would be able to shoulder its responsibility in the various important international issues. This was very clear in the official PLO reaction and in the minutes of the meeting held by the

Soviet consul to Israel with a delegation of local Palestinian figures from the occupied territories August 21.

Other comments by Palestinians in the occupied territories on the Soviet events either stressed the fact that it was too early to predict how they would affect political efforts for peace in the Middle East or expressed hope that the Soviet Union would regain its influential role in the international arena and work to the benefit of suppressed nations.

These facts, we feel, are noteworthy because the Israeli official media is trying to exploit the events and distort the real Palestinian position in the eyes of international public opinion by depicting Palestinians as being against democracy in the Soviet Union and standing by one party against another. This propaganda attempt is certainly doomed to failure.

We wish the Soviet people and their leadership every success in their unmitigated efforts to overcome difficulties and hardships as soon as possible. This should not be difficult for the people who have performed miracles in their modern history.

Editorial on Lessons of Attempted USSR Coup

PM2708103491 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 22 Aug 91 p 11

[Editorial: "The Meaning of Events in Moscow"]

[Text] It seems that, just as the "committee of eight" that ousted Gorbachev surprised the entire world with its first steps, now it is surprising the world again by dissolving itself.

All that has happened in the past two days is a comic play in a single short act—shorter than even the greatest optimists expected. And now the curtain has fallen on it.

Is the coup really over? Will the old perestroyka resume its work with the same faces and policies with which we were familiar until the eve of Gorbachev's ouster?

Will Gorbachev himself return after what has happened and after the clear exposure of the Soviet Union's diseases and illnesses?

These are some of the questions prompted by Soviet events of the past two days, since it has become possible to see how hopes and delusions emerged in one part of the world and how bitterness and frustration dominated another part.

Many people considered it unlikely that a move which displayed all the classic elements of success for any coup or change in the army, security, intelligence, or party bureaucracy could fail. But, despite all this, and as subsequent developments have shown, that move was not destined to succeed.

Is it because the "committee of eight" was not harmonious its stances, demands, and orientations? Or did it fear that its continuation of that move could lead to bloody confrontations in the streets and thus to a civil split that would be deepened by a split in the Army and the security establishment?

No one knows exactly what has happened inside the Kremlin over the past 24 hours.

Until late yesterday it was not clear how matters would end. But what is certain is that Moscow's new men do not include any popular figures who could be introduced to their citizens. This is why every hour that passed with Yeltsin still free was a gain and victory for him, both inside the country and abroad—and especially abroad, since the major Western capitals started dealing with him as the only legitimate leader in the Soviet Union.

Be that as it may, and regardless of the outcome of the power struggle in the Soviet Union—whether Gorbachev returns or whether the "committee of eight" remains in power—what is certain to us Arabs is the wait for the "sincere" foreigner who will come at a time of false inspiration to fill our life with justice after the world's evil has filled it with oppression.

The recent Soviet events have revealed a regrettable waiting for chance and luck—you never know; they might play a role in treating us fairly and regaining our rights. While outside factors are certainly important in boosting or thwarting the people's determination and will, it is also true that this determination and will should be based on their intrinsic substance.

Washington could not have done what it did our countries if the Arabs had a single heart and a single voice. Even if its former role and status were to be restored, the Soviet Union will be unable to do anything for us if we remain in this state of impotence, fragmentation, and capitulation.

The essence of our argument is that depending on the outside and waiting for good fortune to come from outside will not create a nation, form peoples, strengthen determination, or feed the hungry.

We must recognize that we must resolve many of our problems ourselves, because some of them were created by our own hands.

This is not a dismissal of the importance of international relations and alliances or an attempt of self-punishment, but a call to examine the task and to understand the logic that governs its development.

Correction to Fatah Council Communique

CM2708170191

Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic at 1605 GMT on 24 August carries the text of the Fatah Revolutionary Council's communique. It has been compared with the version headlined "Fatah Revolutionary Council Issues Communique" published the 26 August Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, page 2, revealing the following variation: Page three, column one, last paragraph, only sentence reads: ...attachment to the acquired rights of the... (substituting "acquired" for "violated.")

Algeria

Government 'Ready To Collaborate' With Parties

LD2408134691 Algiers APS in English 1026 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Algiers, 24/08/01 (APS)—The head of government, Sid Ahmed Ghozali, reassured Thursday here the political parties of the readiness of the public powers to "accept the control of all the electoral process from the beginning to the proclamation of the results".

"We are ready to collaborate without any reserve, with all the political parties," said Ghozali who brought some precisions concerning the dolances [complaints] of (?the heads) of parties on guarantees to be given for the holding of "clean and honest elections".

While debating the first axis related to these guarantees, most of the participants expressed their concerns in this field. Most of their dolances centered on the necessity to set up a national commission of control of the ballots. This mission, is difficult to be carried out as there are between 33 and 34000 voting bureaux". [sentence as received] Ghozali pointed out that this sort of operations is normally the work of the administration which is ready carry them out but "we are ready to accept the collaboration of the parties", he pointed out.

Council Speaker Considers Revising Electoral Law

LD2608142591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Abdelaziz Belkhadem, speaker of the National People's Council, did not rule out the possibility of revising the electoral law if this is the Algerian people's wish. He said in an interview on Algerian national television yesterday: We propose to ask the Algerian people if they would accept such a revision or not. If the people reply in the negative, then the matter would end; however, if they reply in the affirmative, then we will be forced, as he put it, to review it so as to become compatible with demands of the political forces, including the Islamic Salvation Front.

National Assembly Vote on Finance Act Expected

LD2608141591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The People's National Assembly is expected to vote today on the draft Supplementary Finance Act for 1991, following the postponment of yesterday's evening session because of the failure of the Planning, Finance, and Budget Committee to complete the drafting of the supplementary report due to differences over Articles 25 and 26 of the draft Supplementary Finance Act. These articles deal with the compensation rates. Apparently, each of the government representatives and committee members had his views on the abolition or reduction of these compensation rates. We just learned from Souad Abdelfi, our radio correspondent at the Assembly, that the session scheduled for this morning began only 30 minutes ago. According to our information, received from responsible quarters at the parliament, the delay until this afternoon was due to differences between the proposals put forward by the government and those put forward by the Planning and Finance Committee over the Supplementary Finance Act.

National Assembly Rejects Price Increases

LD2608164291 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The National People's Assembly today rejected the proposed price increases for some essential commodities of widescale consumption, such as sugar and butane and propane gas.

Abdelaziz Belkhadem, speaker of the National People's Assembly, has stated that today or tomorrow the government will contact the IMF to renegotiate the section of the former government's agreement with the IMF that deals with prices.

Egypt

Mubarak Receives Thanks From Gorbachev

NC2608142491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1320 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 26 Aug (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received a message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in which the latter expressed gratitude on his own behalf and on behalf of the Soviet leadership and government for the stand Egypt and President Mubarak adopted during the recent events in the USSR.

This was announced by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who met with Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Poliyakov today. Musa said that the ambassador briefed him on the latest developments in his country and asserted the USSR's determination to continue the peace process in the Middle East together with the United States and in coordination with Egypt.

Musa added that he told the ambassador of President Mubarak's interest in developments in the USSR, particularly at this critical time when events there influence the whole international situation.

For his part, the Soviet ambassador said he told the foreign minister of the Soviet people's gratitude and appreciation for the support given to President Gorbachev by the Egyptian people and President Mubarak. He said the Egyptian stand supports liberty and progress. He added that the Soviet people appreciated President Mubarak's telephone call to President Gorbachev, in which he expressed support for legitimacy. The ambassador said: We regard this as a principled stand by a sincere friend of the USSR who can be relied on at any time.

The foreign minister and the Soviet ambassador also discussed bilateral ties during their meeting. The ambassador emphasized that the recent events will not affect the USSR's stand on the Middle East issue and may even promote the convening of a peace conference.

Foreign Minister Views Mideast Issues, USSR

NC2408105391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0832 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that a key element of Egypt's Arab policy is to heal the rift in the Arab ranks following the painful divisions caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

'Amr Musa said that reviving Arab solidarity should be guided more by respect for the legitimate and common interests of the Arabs than by slogans and emotions. Musa made these remarks at a meeting with National Democratic Party leaders and members of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council in Alexandria last night.

Musa said that inter-Arab relations should be based on sound foundations, which means that the safety and sovereignty of all Arab countries should be respected, that economic cooperation should move forward, and that the development process should proceed with a sense of responsibility and a commitment to Arab solidarity and cooperation. [passage omitted]

Speaking of Arab security, Musa said that this security cannot be guaranteed unless existing problems, including the Palestine issue and the Middle East peace process, are dealt with.

Musa said that Israel will remain unable to participate in any security system in the region until it participates in the peace process with an open-minded policy concerning the withdrawal from the Arab occupied territories and the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Musa said the Palestinian people also should recognize the rights of all countries, including Israel, as stated in UN resolutions.

The foreign minister said that Israel should show commitment to the international legitimacy, as embodied in UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, concerning the Middle East issue to be able to participate in a regional system for the Middle East.

'Amr Musa said the Arabs and Israel should honor their obligations in accordance with UN resolutions. He added that Israel should withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, reiterating that no regional security system in the Middle East can be established as long as Israeli occupation of Arab land continues.

The foreign minister said Egypt rejects Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan, adding that such measures are rejected, illegal, and unacceptable under all circumstances.

Minister Musa said: I clearly state that no one has the right to ask others to tolerate illegitimate situations, because this will mean providing an unstable foundation for a system that cannot last and cannot bring real peace to the Middle East.

Minister Musa said that to establish a security system in the region and consolidate regional stability, an acceptable and just solution should be found for the Palestinian issue and the Middle East problem.

The foreign minister said that luckily there is a peace process under way, a process that was proposed by the United States and supported by various parties. This peace process aims at holding a peace conference involving a mechanism of direct negotiations on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 and in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. Chief among these principles, he said, are the rejection of possessing land through war, the necessity of withdrawal, respect for other countries' rights to live in peace within safe borders, the right of the Palestinian people for self-determination, and the restoration of the land occupied in 1967.

'Amr Musa said the Middle East and the Palestinian issue represent a major problem that must be resolved in order to deal with other issues in the region.

Commenting on the process of arms control in the Middle East, which is related to disarmament worldwide, Musa said that Egypt has a clear policy. Egypt, he said, calls for removing the weapons of mass destruction from all Middle East countries, not excepting one country or any such weapons. 'Amr Musa said such a move should be combined with international supervision of all sides to avoid any conflict so all sides are treated similarly in terms of disarmament and arms control and in accordance with a collective agreement. [passage indistinct]

The foreign minister said the Egyptian diplomacy has a major commitment to the Middle East, the Arab world, and the world as a whole. He added there is a new focus for Egyptian diplomacy—the Mediterranean. 'Amr Musa said Egypt is in contact with Arab and African countries and that it plays a role in coordinating between Europe and the Arab world to enhance cooperation and understanding. [passage omitted]

'Amr Musa then commented on the recent events in the USSR. He said since the first moments of these events Egypt has stood with the legitimacy. He added that President Mubarak was among the first leaders to congratulate Gorbachev on his restoration to power.

Musa said the course of reform in the Soviet Union is continuing and irreversible. He added that anyone who

thought the course of reform will be stopped just because a few people have challenged the lawful government is mistaken. Reform is moving forward everywhere in the world, Musa said. A new spirit of cooperation is pervading economics and politics, and its aim is to to end conflicts and terminate regional tensions, he said.

The Egyptian role in this process is an effective one and is part of an international trend, Musa said. He added: We are now trying to defend the rights of our people in this region. Our people have a right for a better life and for solutions. The restoration of our rights will enable the Middle East to be a part of the efforts to create a new world.

Commenting on Middle East peace and the extent to which the peace process was affected by the Soviet events, Musa said: I have telephoned U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. In his recent message to me, and during that telephone call, Baker said the United States is determined to continue the peace process regardless of any developments. This is a prudent view, because the peace process should not stop because of events in any country or region. The peace conference should be held as soon as possible, Musa said.

He added: We in Egypt cannot let the peace process collapse or be stopped by obstacles. It is important to resolve outstanding issues.

The foreign minister said that the building of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories is illegal. These settlements, he added, will not make us regret demanding the restoration of all the land occupied in 1967. The building of any settlement does not give Israel any right, for what is built for wrongful reasons is wrong.

Libya

Foreign Ministry Criticizes VOA Commentary

LD2608122991 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0810 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Tripoli, 26 Aug (JANA)—The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation issued the following statement:

The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation decries the commentary broadcast by the Voice of America yesterday evening, which expresses the views of the U.S. Government.

The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation examined the commentary which expresses the views of the U.S. Government, broadcast by VOA on the evening of Sunday, 25 August. The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation in the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah would like to clarify that the commentary is a blatant interference in the internal affairs of an independent and sovereign state, namely the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, and also is an assault on its sovereignty, thus contravening the UN Charter, which prohibits interference in options chosen by other peoples and in their internal affairs. The commentary and its contents are also tantamount to organized terrorism against the Libyan Arab people, which is being practiced by the U.S. administration with the intention of underming our people's morale.

As a member of the international community, Libya has the right to pursue the policy that it believes would serve its interests within the framework of mutual respect between it and other states, and within the framework of [word indistinct] and the reverence it holds for the peoples' freedom.

It suffices to say that what took place on 1 September 1969 was a revolution deeply rooted in the Libyan soil that drew its legitimacy from the pains of our people who suffered over long centuries from foreign occupation, and who experienced the gallows and homelessness. The Libyan Arab people, whose destiny was dominated by U.S. nuclear bases, [words indistinct] out of their belief that those bases were threatening world peace and security, not only in this region but in the whole world.

The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation has noted that the descriptions and characteristics that the commentary attributed to brother leader of the revolution Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi are a great insult to all the Libyan Arab people—men and women—the Arab nation, and all Muslims, because we are aware that they are motivated by Zionist and crusader spite, which does not want to see free people in this world expressing the will of their peoples and edifying their aspirations...thus, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is the symbol of this people, and the symbol of the pride of the Arab nations and its many millions.

The Libyan Arab people have not complained to the United States that they are suffering from oppression and from lack of freedom of expression or congregation. Here in Libya, the Libyan Arab people exercise direct people's authority through their basic people's congresses, which possess sovereignty and [the right of] decisionmaking...there is no master above them and there is no one to oppress them. The people also exercise the freedom to congregate [words indistinct] at basic people's congresses, trade unions, and professional leagues, and every individual within it expresses himself as he wants—thus embodying the most noble true concepts of freedom...and every individual within it enjoys his right to his effort and the sweat of his brow.

The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation firmly believes that the writers of that commentary and the U.S. Administration have deliberately ignored the great green document on human rights in the era of the masses that

protects the individual, holds sacred his freedom, and honors him as a being created by God enjoying his full rights...the External Liaison Bureau would like to stress that there are no political prisons or detention centers...and execution by electric chair does not exist as it does in America.

As for talks about terrorism and supporting it, that is distasteful. Libya distinguishes well between the just struggle of peoples, which is endorsed by the UN Charter, and terrorism which targets civilians, which we have absolutely rejected [word indistinct]. Here we would like to ask whether the psychological warfare which aims at destroying peoples and homelands is not the fiercest form of terrorism.

The People's Committee of People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation alerts that the Great Jamahiriyah is the only state in the world that has condemned, and is still condemning, the single-party system and autocracy as instruments of oppression and dictatorship.

The Libyan Arab people have accepted their option represented in people's authority through basic people's congresses, which is an option that confirms the daily consolidation of freedom in this land. In as much as the Libyan Arab people respect the options and the ruling system of others, they do not want to see anyone installing himself in the judge's bench to rule without there being a complainant—this option is not a good one.

This commentary expresses the arrogance of power and the law of force, and lacks correct and civilized logic [words indistinct].

Morocco

King Hassan II Congratulates Gorbachev

LD2408165391 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 22 Aug 91

[Text] The situation and developments in the Soviet Union following President Gorbachev's return to power are still in the headlines. International and Arab reaction bearing expressions of welcome and congratulations to the Soviet president on the trust he enjoys in his country, which was the principal factor in aborting the recent coup attempt, are continuing. In the course of these reactions, we point out the message that was sent by His Majesty King Hassan II to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev congratulating him on his return to the leadership of authority in the Soviet Union. Here is the text of the message:

Mr. President and our great friend, your resumption of your full duties will remain an event of great historical significance that affirms the triumph of the values of democracy, liberty, and legitimacy. The citizens and their leaders have proved that the glorious history and the fundamental wisdom of their predecessors will be present more then ever before. On the other hand, the bravery demonstrated by the Soviet people clearly indicates that the era of conflicts and the cold war has finally gone, and that the world is now coming to an era that would be followed by peace and prosperity. While expressing to you our warm congratulations, we would like you, Mr. President and our great friend, to accept our highest sentiments of appreciation.

[Signed] King of Morocco, Hassan II.

Armed Forces Continue 'Mopping-Up' in Sahara

LD2408121491 Rabat MAP in Arabic 0900 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Rabat, 24 Aug (MAP)—Units of the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces stationed in the Western Sahara region systematically and within the framework of special patrols continued their mopping-up and combing operations in the buffer zone between the security wall and the border line of the Moroccan Sahara.

Indeed according to exact and identical information given by people who have lately returned to Morocco, the Royal Armed forces have been carrying out said operations in this region since the first week of August, and are still carrying them out. In addition the area has been under continuous and alert surveillance by its members. It has been mentioned in this context that the matter in no way relates to wide-scale operations.

It is worth mentioning in this respect that the security wall was built behind the borderline of the Moroccan Sahara to enable the Royal Armed forces to carry out their defensive action in such a way that their operations under no circumstances touch upon the territories of the neighboring states Algeria and Mauritania.

Western Sahara

Polisario 'Will Continue To Honor' Cease-Fire

LD2608231291 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2200 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Western Sahara—The toll of the latest Moroccan offensive against Bir Lahlou in the Saharan liberated territories is 19 dead and 65 missing, mainly women and children. [passage omitted] The Saharan ambassador to Algiers confirmed these reports to us a short while ago. According to Mr. Ibrahim Hakim, the Saharan People's Liberation Army is currently devoted exclusively to aiding and assisting the Saharan civilian population, above all women and children.

It should be understood that according to the Saharan ambassador in Algiers there is so far no fighting between the Moroccan Army and the Saharan Army. The secretary general of the Organization of African Unity hinted that this was not the case when in his appeal for peace he called on Morocco and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia el Hamra and Rio de Oro [Polisario] to

halt the fighting. However, in a communique issued in Madrid the Polisario Front specifies, I quote, that it will continue to honor the unilateral cease-fire called at the request of the United Nations. If, however, by 6 September, the date set by the United Nations for the cease-fire to come into force, the international organizations have not succeeded in checking the attacks by the Moroccan Army, then the Saharans will consider they have a legitimate right to defend themselves, end of quote. [passage omitted]

'Absurd' Justification for Army Moves Rejected

LD2408231591 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Excerpt] We complete the international news in the Sahara, for, as a spokesman for the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Western Sahara] front reported to RNE, elite forces of the Moroccan Army are advancing from (Es Semara) toward the Polisario camps in Tifariti. The Moroccan Government has admitted that a movement of forces is under way, although it justified it as an antiterrorist mopping-up operation to guarantee the free holding of the referendum on the self-determination of the Sahara. Angeles Bazan reports:

[Bazan] Elite forces of the Moroccan Army have been advancing in the past hours from (Es Semara) to Polisario front positions in Tifariti, in the north of the Western Sahara. Hash Ahmed, the front's representative in Spain, said that the march of the Moroccan forces toward the Polisario enclaves is proceeding slowly, despite the fact that the Saharans are not offering any resistance, awaiting the pronouncement of the United Nations on the new offensive by the Moroccan Government. A Moroccan spokesman justified this offensive as everyday mopping-up operations to prevent terrorist actions inside the Western Sahara, operations which have already mobilized 100,000 soldiers from five regiments which are marching in different directions. In the opinion of the Polisario front, this Moroccan justification is absurd, if it is borne in mind that the Saharan people has never resorted to such methods to carry on the legitimate claim of its right to self-determination. The Saharan office in Spain says in a communique released today that it should be asked whether the terrorism denounced by Morocco is not practiced by its government with this scorched earth policy, harassing, and destroying with its bombardments the dwellings and installations of the Saharan people. The note adds that the Moroccan forces are taking advantage of this time of truce, decreed unilaterally by the Polisario at the request of the UN secretary general, to occupy a territory which they have not succeeded in controlling in over 15 years of war because of the constant defense of the Saharan Army. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Iran Resumes Flights to Kuwait After 10-Year Gap

LD2608190691 London KUNA in Arabic 1616 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Kuwait, 26 Aug (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti General Administration for Civil Aviation today announced its approval of an Iranian request for the resumption of Iran Air flights to Kuwait after a gap of over 10 years.

In a statement today, a copy of which has been received by KUNA, Fawwaz 'abd-al-'Aziz al-Furayh, the administration's director of air transport, said that Iran Air will operate four weekly flights between Kuwait and Iran as of the beginning of September.

He added that his administration also approved a British Airways request to resume its direct nonstop flights between Kuwait and London as of the beginning of September, at the rate of three flights a week.

British Airways resumed its flights to Kuwait on 10 June, but that was via Bahrain, using Lockheed Tristar aircraft. It had had to suspend its flights to Kuwait because of the Iraqi occupation.

Al-Furayh added that Cyprus Airways, which also suspended is flights to Kuwait because of the Iraqi invasion, will resume its flights between Kuwait and Larnaca, with two flights a week, starting on 2 September.

He stated that these airlines will raise to 21 the number of Arab and foreign airlines flying to Kuwait International Airport. He declared that the Kuwaiti Civil Aviation Administration is anxious to provide all the necessary facilities to enhance air traffic to and from Kuwait.

Foreign Minister Returns From GCC Tour

NC2608174991 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, returned today following a tour of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries on which he had been sent as a special envoy by his highness the amir. During his two-day tour, Shaykh Salim al-Sabah delivered messages from his highness to the leaders of the GCC states concerning the efforts to pressure the Iraqi regime to implement all UN Security Council resolutions [words indistinct] Kuwait, particularly the immediate release of all the Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees it is holding, the demarcation of the border, and an exposure of the Iraqi regime's procrastination in implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister hailed the GCC leaders' support for Kuwait in a statement to correspondents upon his return. He said they told him the Kuwaiti prisoners are like their own sons.

Shaykh Salim al-Sabah was welcomed on arrival by Dari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman, minister of state for cabinet affairs; Majid al-Shahin, Foreign Ministry under secretary; the ambassadors of the GCC states; and senior Foreign Ministry officials.

Malaysian Deputy Premier Arrives 26 Aug

BK2608145991 Kuala Lumpur Radio Malaysia Network in English 1330 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Malaysia is not seeking any special favor from the Kuwait Government or its businessmen in the emirate's reconstruction program. This was stated by Deputy Prime Minister Encik Ghafar Baba. He said it was up to the Malaysian businessmen and traders themselves to bid for the contracts in reconstruction projects and supply of goods in high demand in Kuwait. He told Malaysian journalists this on arrival in Kuwait City for a three-day official visit.

Encik Ghafar is heading a delegation of 48 businessmen to explore trade and investment opportunities as Kuwait rebuilds its economy and social life devastated during the Gulf war. This is the first high-level delegation from Malaysia to visit Kuwait since it was liberated on 22 February after seven months of occupation by Iraq.

He also said Kuwait could make Malaysia a distribution center for its crude oil to the markets of the east. This could be one of the ways to increase the present small volume of trade between both countries. Malaysia is a major importer of crude oil from Kuwait.

He said Iran had proposed to set up a distribution center for its crude oil in Malaysia and Kuwait should consider doing the same. Encik Ghafar, who will also a (?business) mission to Iran after Kuwait, said he would hold further talks on the Iranian proposal during his four-day visit.

He will call on the amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad Al Sabah, and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'ad al-Ahmad Al Sabah tomorrow.

Yemen

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Arrives 26 Aug

JN2708055691 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Brother Hosein Sheikh-ol-Eslam, deputy foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, arrived in Sanaa last night on a visit of several days to our country.

In a statement to the Yemeni news agency, SABA', brother Hosein Sheikh-ol-Eslam noted that he is carrying a message to brother Lieutenant General President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih from his brother Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, dealing with the Palestine question and developments in the Arab and Islamic arenas.

He said that during the visit, he will hold talks with the officials in our country on relations between the two fraternal countries. [passage omitted]

Justice Minister Thanks Saddam on Salary Increase

JN2708055391 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 25 Aug 91 pp 1, 7

[Text] President Saddam Husayn has received a cable from Minister of Justice Shabib Lazim al-Malki in which he expressed his gratitude for his excellency's noble gesture of increasing the salaries of judges to enhance the judiciary's status.

The following is the text of the cable:

To the pioneer and guardian of justice, esteemed struggler President Saddam Husayn, God bless and protect him.

Your noble gesture of increasing the salaries of judges by 25 percent is clear and certain proof of your excellency's great appreciation for the role of the judiciary in realizing justice and in entrenching the principles of the sovereignty of law. This is a new gesture, to be added to your numerous other gestures, to enhance the status of the judiciary and provide it with the honored status it had during the time of our great grandfathers, the Arab Muslims, and the care and protection it used to receive.

On this occasion, the judges and magistrates renew their pledge of loyalty to you, president leader, and promise to remain the soldiers of justice and messengers of equality. They are determined to work with great loyalty and devotion to bolster the noble principles inspired by our Islamic laws and ancient Arabic heritage so that the banner of justice and equality you have borne will continue to flutter over our cherished homeland.

Long may you live, our victorious leader, as a symbol of lofty Iraq and a title for its national unity, a guardian of justice and vanguard of equality.

May God's peace and blessings be upon you.
[Signed] Shabib Lazim al-Malki, minister of justice.

Men Marrying Widows To Get Favorable Loans

JN2608155091 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has issued a decree that the Socialist Bank will lend 7,000 dinars to anyone who marries a widow. Here is the text of the decree:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The RCC Decision No. 292, dated 12 Safar 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 22 August 1991. Decision:

Based on Paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

1. The Socialist Bank shall lend any man who gets married to a widow the amount of 7,000 dinars. Of this sum, 3,000 dinars shall be written off when the marriage contract is shown. The remainder shall be repayed in installments in accordance with the regulations of the bank.

2. The competent authorities and the concerned departments shall implement this decree.

[signed] RCC Chairman Saddam Husayn.

U.S. 24-45 Aug Overflights Protested to UN

JN2608134191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1246 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] New York, 26 Aug (INA)—U.S. aircraft have once again violated Iraqi airspace, engaging in acts of surveillance and provocation.

Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations said in a memorandum to the UN secretary general that on 24-25 August U.S. warplanes carried out 21 sorties consisting of 10 two-plane formations and one single-plane sortie.

The planes flew primarily over Mosul, Irbil, Dahuk, al-'Amadiyah, and Zakho, travelling at speeds between 600 and 900 km per hour, at altitudes of 6 to 8 km.

National Assembly Approves Parties Law Changes

Meets 24 Aug

JN2408131091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Aug (INA)—The National Assembly has approved the amendments to the political parties law made by the Revolution Command Council.

The clauses approved by the Assembly in an extraordinary session held today under Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih's leadership, stipulate that the political party's principles, objectives, and methods must be clear regarding adherence to and protection of Iraq's independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and national unity. The clauses also stipulate that every political party has the right to issue a political newspaper or magazine or both, and is not allowed to establish any direct or indirect relations with any governmental body in a foreign country.

The clauses also stipulate that it is not allowed to establish a political party on the basis of atheism, sectarianism, racism, regionalism, or anti-Arabism, and that the party's bylaws should not include any conditions of membership based on race or sect.

The draft law bans any political party from receiving funds or material support from any foreign party, society, organization, individual, or body without the approval of the Council of Ministers.

The National Assembly's Legal, Citizens' Affairs, Arab and International Relations, and Culture and Information Committees studied the amendments made to six clauses and submitted reports that included their views and notes to the extraordinary session.

Proposed Amendments Detailed

JN2408095891 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 22 Aug 91 p 2

[Text] The people's representatives will discuss in an extraordinary session on 24 August amendments to the political parties' law, which was debated and endorsed by the National Assembly after it had been significantly amended.

A responsible source at the assembly termed the recent amendments substantial, especially regarding Article 5.

'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Hiti, chairman of the Citizens' Affairs and Public Services Committee, told AL-'IRAQ yesterday that his committee had completed its examination of the amendments and that it, along with the other permanent committees of the assembly, will submit a consolidated report on the issue to the assembly. He indicated that the amendments concern Articles 3, 5, 15, 17, 18, and 24 of the law.

With regard to Article 3, the amendments propose addition of the phrase "and the principles of the 14 July revolution" to what is originally contained in the article.

Likewise, Article 5 will be amended. Provisions of this article which provide for the inadmissibility of forming political parties on the basis of mixing religion with politics will be revoked. As regards Article 15, a draft amendment was introduced. The word "newspaper" [sahifah] has been replaced with the word "gazette" [jaridah]. As for the amendment to Article 18, it introduces more stringent punitive measures against those who violate the provisions of Article 18.

Jasim Meets French-Iraqi Friendship Group Head

JN2508133291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 25 Aug (INA)—Latif Nusayyif Jasim, member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command and official in charge of the Regional Command Foreign Relations Bureau, has described the economic blockade imposed on the Iraqi people as unjust and immoral.

During his meeting with Jille Monier [name as received], chairman of the French-Iraqi Friendship Society, Jasim said that, while they are talking about justice, equality, and democracy, the big powers are implementing their unjust decisions to kill Iraqi women, elderly, and children. [passage omitted]

Jasim urged the French-Iraqi Friendship Society and the French people in general to begin a large-scale, quick move to expose hostile policies against Iraq. He stressed that it is illogical to starve the Iraqi people for more than a year.

Jille Monier, chairman of the French-Iraqi Friendship Society, said that the U.S. President's hostility to Iraq is linked with Zionism and Freemasonry, and that Bush comes third on the list of those working in the American Freemasonry. This, he added, made him attack Iraq and strive to dominate the world. He described the plan the French Government submitted to the Security Council as a shameful move to help mask the U.S. aggression against Iraq.

He affirmed that the French-Iraqi Friendship Society will begin a large-scale move among French companies to influence mass media and unveil realities about the aggression against Iraq and to unfreeze Iraqi assets in France.

The meeting was attended by 'Adnan Dawud Salman, member of the Regional Command Foreign Relations Bureau.

Panama's Linares Voices Concern on U.S. Moves

JN2208153891 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Aug 91

[Text] Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares has described the U.S. Congress' attempts to force his country to negotiate a new treaty which would allow U.S. forces to remain in Panama after 1999, as a violation of sovereignty and international law, which declares that states must not be forced to sign treaties with other states.

In a message received by Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn, Linares affirmed that contractual relations between countries must always be based on free choice, and he stressed that the U.S. Administration's attempt harms relations between the United States and Panama. The Panamanian foreign minister voiced concern over the U.S. Administration's behavior, especially because the world is on the threshold of the 21st century. He recalled the bitter experiences his country endured due to the disreputable treaty of 1903 with the United States.

It is worth noting that last June, the U.S. Congress debated whether to hold talks between the U.S. President and the Panamanian Government to conclude a treaty granting U.S. forces a permanent presence in Panama after 1991 [sentence as heard].

Health Official: Embargo Killed 14,333 Children

JN2608132991 Baghdad INA in English 1248 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, Aug 26, INA—Some 14333 Iraqi children under 5-year old died owing to the iniquitous economic blocade imposed on the people of Iraq.

Health Undersecretary Dr. Shawqi Sabri told INA that the shortage in vaccines, medicine and other medical appliances and malnutrition resulting from the economic embargo on Iraq were the direct and principal causes of children mortality, confirming that the next months would see acute increase in children mortality because of the continuity of the unjust blockade and the failure in implementing the preventive and curative health programs in Iraq.

He appealed to the world health and humanitarian organizations to exert further and serious efforts for lifting the blockade imposed on the people of Iraq and saving thousands of children from possible death.

Group Dealing in Counterfeit Money Apprehended

JN2608172991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Aug (INA)—Baghdad's anticrime services have captured a gang which was dealing in large amounts of foreign currency and counterfeit money.

The director of the crime combat office at Saddam City in Baghdad provided a detailed account of how the three-member gang, headed by 'Ali Hasan, an Arab national, was tracked down and apprehended. He said one of the detectives, passing himself off as a currency dealer, managed to infiltrate the gang and identify its members in only 72 hours.

He told AL-JUMHURIYAH today that 20 million Iranian rials and $12,000 were found in the possession of the gang and have been seized. The cash was taken to the Central Bank where its authenticity can be verified.

In a related incident, it was disclosed that a 25-dinar banknote, forged in a primitive manner with ordinary paper, magic markers, and pastel colors was found in the possession of a juvenile.

'Conspiracy' Against Iraq, Palestine Said Linked

JN2608095791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0717 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Aug (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has said that the events and links of the 30-state aggression prove that seeking the comprehensive destruction of Iraq and the annihilation of Iraqis through starvation and disease as a result of the economic blockade imposed on Iraq seeks to impair its effective pan-Arab role in all issues, particularly the central Palestinian issue.

In its editorial today, the paper adds that its has become absolutely clear that all attempts to harm, besiege, and impose unjust resolutions against Iraq, including Resolutions 705, 706, and 707, are part of the Zionist conspiracy, and that, by all standards, these moves are linked with and constitute an extension of the conspiracy to usurp Palestine.

The paper stresses that the attempt to put political and economic pressure on Iraq is part of the same plot against the Palestine question, and that the injustice being inflicted on Iraq in terms of making it subject to aggression, blockade, and exposed successive plots is part of the same injustice inflicted on Palestine and its people.

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds that the attempts to usurp Iraq's rights, headed by Iraq's inalienable right to sovereignty and free handling of its resources and affairs constitute a flagrant extension of the usurpation of Arab rights and a termination of its effective pan-Arab existence in the Arab homeland, the region, and human life throughout the world.

The paper asserts that the despots who formulate the unjust and mean UN Security Council resolutions are the same as those who formulate capitulationist settlement plans and define steps to fulfil the wishes of the Zionists who covet Arab territory, resources, and holy places.

The paper refers to the resolutions being passed and the fervent efforts being made to take further steps to liquidate the Palestine question. The paper says: This is the clearest description of the biggest and most dangerous link in the conspiracy against the Arabs through the conspiracy against Iraq and what it stands for, being a model of the genuine Arab will and principled determination.

Concluding its editorial, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: Since the Iraqis are aware of the aspects of this fact, it suffices to make them understand its dimensions, endure its hardships, and firmly and strongly hold fast in the face of enemy coalition and its mean methods.

National Distribution, Publishing Company Founded

JN2608170791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1333 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Aug (INA)—A mixed joint stock company was founded here today with capital of 3 million Iraqi dinars, called the National Company for Distribution and Publication.

A decision issued by the Revolution Command Council has set the contribution of the information departments and the other government departments at 51 percent of the shares. The culture and information minister is authorized to form a board of directors which will be charged with the company's foundation.

The company will assume the work of the National House for Distribution and Advertisement, which was closed with this decision. The company will be in charge of distributing and publishing Iraqi newspapers, magazines, and books.

Sources Downplay Expectations on Prisoner Swap

TA2708064191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0534 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Israel wants to lower the expectations that were raised by the UN secretary general's statements that a hostage swap was imminent. Political sources yesterday reported that Israel has still not received any information on any progress in the contacts and added that they are still waiting for a report by UN emissary Giandominico Pico on his talks in the region regarding the hostage issue.

As for Hizballah's statements that the group is holding two Israeli soldiers, sources in Jerusalem have asserted that this is part of the war of nerves the various organizations are waging against Israel. Those holding the prisoners are exploiting our desire to bring about a comprehensive prisoner exchange and to receive a sign of life from our POW's and MIA's, the sources said.

On the same issue, Interior Minister Arye Der'i has issued an order barring Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi from leaving the country for four months. Al-Tibi was scheduled to meet the Austrian foreign minister on the hostage issue. In the past, al-Tibi had delivered some information on the POW's and MIA's. The Interior Ministry's order stated that there was room for concern that Dr. al-Tibi, who, by the way, is an Israeli citizen, would meet PLO officials in Vienna. In response al-Tibi said that the Israeli Government is acting in a manipulative manner and contravening the right of free movement.

[Begin al-Tibi recording] We are simply fed up with the fact that every time we intend to leave to go abroad, my colleagues and myself must promise that we do not intend to meet PLO leaders or representatives while overseas. I did not intend to meet PLO representatives. I was invited by the United Nations to participate in a convention of the nongovernmental organizations on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Vienna, the capital of Austria. [end recording]

Political sources in Jerusalem, however, said that the negotiations on the prisoner release would be conducted only by the Israeli Government and its official representatives.

Yakovlev Expects Diplomatic Ties Within Month

TA2708080391 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 27 Aug 91 pp A1, 2

[Report by Arik Bakhar in Moscow]

[Excerpt] Aleksandr Yakovlev, one of the key figures in the Soviet leadership who might soon be named President Mikhail Gorbachev's deputy, said that he expects full diplomatic relations with Israel within a month.

I met Yakovlev, considered the chief ideologue of perestroyka, in the foyer of the Supreme Soviet. He answered my questions before rushing off to the plenum to hear Gorbachev's address.

[Bakhar] How will the events of the past week in the USSR influence the resumption of relations with Israel?

[Yakovlev] I am convinced that we have to restore full diplomatic relations with Israel.

[Bakhar] How long will that take?

[Yakovlev] I think it should not take more than a month. [passage omitted]

Shamir on Eastern Europe, Baltics, Hostage Issue

TA2708061991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0525 GMT 27 Aug 91

[News conference by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir at Ben-Gurion Airport prior to his departure on a four-day official visit to Bulgaria with domestic correspondents—live; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Shamir] ...of eastern Europe, after many years in which relations were severed and there was an empty void which now must be filled. There are already encouraging signs in Bulgaria with the beginning of economic and technological cooperation in certain fields. We will try to imbue these efforts with additional content and significance. I expect to hold interesting and friendly meetings with the leaders of the country and with the members of the Jewish community, of whom approximately 1,000 have already immigrated to Israel. At the end of my visit I expect to leave with the feeling that we have consolidated and further strengthened another focal point of understanding and friendship in Israel's foreign relations. Thank you very much.

[Shlomo Raz, Qol Yisra'el] Mr. Prime Minister, does Israel have further plans regarding East Europe, beyond this visit to Bulgaria, such as recognizing the Baltic states?

[Shamir] We generally devote much attention to the countries of East Europe and today we are doing so even more than usual. We must fill the empty void. Regarding the recent developments in the Soviet Union, we are following developments there and observing how relations are developing with many other countries. We are in no hurry to be the first to take steps.

[Ro'i Greenwald, IDF Radio] Do you think that the developments in the Soviet Union could pose obstacles to the peace process?

[Shamir] At the moment, it is hard to say, because new things are happening there every day, and we have to see how things develop. I hope that whatever happens in the Soviet Union will not prevent the promotion and progress of the peace progress.

[Greenwald] Will the exit of the Soviet Jews be stepped up following the recent developments?

[Shamir] In the meantime, the immigration of Soviet Jews is continuing at a normal rate. There is some hope that the departure rate will accelerate, but we must wait and see.

[Raz] Mr. Shamir, can we assume that the peace conference will be postponed and not take place in October?

[Shamir] I do not know yet. It is hard to say. Anything is possible; however, I do not think that the exact date on which the process begins is very important.

[Raz] Mr. Shamir, I would like to take this opportunity to ask whether there has been any progress on the hostage issue. We have heard that the UN secretary general is very optimistic.

[Shamir] We were pleased to hear the UN secretary general's optimistic statements. I hope he has good news, but we have not yet received any.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, reports from Cairo say that an invitation from President Mubarak is on its way.

[Shamir] It has been on its way for a long time [laughs], but let us wait and see.

Government To Follow U.S. Decision on Baltics

LD2708082291 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 27 Aug 91 p 5

[Report by Shim'on Schiffer]

[Excerpt] For the time being, Israel will not establish diplomatic relations with the Baltic republics, which have declared their independence.

Our political correspondent was told that the government intends to watch what the United States does, and, if it establishes diplomatic ties with the three republics, Israel will do the same.

In a discussion yesterday headed by Foreign Minister David Levi, it was pointed out that Israel has for several years conducted direct ties with the Baltic states in the fields of science, culture, and trade, as well as parliamentary relations and reciprocal visits. [passage omitted]

Levi on Baltic Independence, USSR Relations

TA2608153191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi said today that the Baltic republics' aspiration to independence is compatible with the spirit of democracy and liberalism now blowing in the USSR and should be implemented in the spirit of those changes. In summing up a Foreign Ministry meeting on the issue, Levi said he hopes the decision to reestablish diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR will be sped up following the conservatives' fall from power.

Visiting Ukrainian Envoys Suggest Consular Ties

TA2608113891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] A parliamentary delegation from the Ukraine, headed by Parliament Deputy Speaker Vladimir (Grinyov) [name and title as heard], has arrived in Israel. The delegation leader proposed that Israel and the Ukraine establish consular ties at once, but added that he understands that Israel wishes to establish ties with Moscow first.

(Grinyov) said the Ukraine would like to see Jews who had left for Israel return as business investors. In that context, he added that the Ukrainian authorities view Jews as a very important factor in the development of their economy and culture and are therefore encouraging them not to leave the republic.

Our correspondent Gid'on Rotem adds that, in about a month, a mass ceremony will be held in Babi Yar in commemoration of the massacre on that site. The Ukraine is planning a state-sponsored ceremony.

Ukraine Invites Minister to Babi Yar Ceremonies

TA2608144691 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 26 Aug 91 p A

[Report by Sara Friedman]

[Text] The Ukrainian Government has invited Education and Culture Minister Zvulun Hammer to represent Israel in the events marking the 50th anniversary of the Babi Yar massacre. The minister was invited by Professor Sergey Komisarinko, the Ukrainian deputy prime minister [name and title as published], who heads the committee organizing the ceremonies.

The invitation was delivered verbally some time ago, when Prof. Komisarinko visited Israel. The official invitation arrived last weekend.

Among the events to be held in the Ukraine is a scientific conference on the Holocaust and its repercussions, as well as a march along the route taken by the Jews on their way to be massacred in the Babi Yar forest. The procession will be led by Minister Hammer. In addition, there will be a ceremony marking the reconversion of a theater in Kiev back to its original use as a synagogue.

Representatives of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial will present medals to 25 Ukrainians who saved Jews during the Holocaust. Minister Hammer will also visit Moscow and meet with Soviet ministers at the invitation of the Soviet culture minister.

Cabinet Views Peace Process After Soviet Events

TA2508154491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Today's cabinet meeting concentrated on events in the USSR. Right-wing ministers claimed that the developments there require that the peace conference be postponed. Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi said that what has happened in the USSR and the behavior of the Palestinians—who, he said, danced on the rooftops—require delaying the regional conference by at least six months. Similar remarks were made by Tehiya Minister Yuval Ne'eman:

[Begin Ne'eman recording] What is the USSR? Will the conference now be convened by President Bush and the 15 presidents of the republics that have seceded from the USSR and will constitute tomorrow's USSR? What is the significance of the whole thing? [end recording]

Minister Ari'el Sharon also urged freezing the political process in the wake of the Soviet developments.

Foreign Minister David Levi, responding to the ministers, rejected the demand to freeze the process. It does not add anything and is not politically wise, Levi said. What benefit could Israel gain from such a move? Why should we change our policy, Levi asked, and he added: If we pull out from the process, will we be better off? Will it improve our chances of advancing our interests, or will it lead others to criticize us? Minister Moshe Qatzav made similar remarks:

[Begin Qatzav recording] The status of the USSR in the process might be affected, but we should be interested in advancing the process itself. It is not being imposed on us. We entered the process of our own free will, and we should be interested in promoting it. [end recording]

The cabinet was presented reports on the USSR by aliya and defense officials. There is an evaluation that the United States will now be more dominant and that could speed up reforms in the USSR. In reference to events in our region, the cabinet was given a report that U.S.-Soviet cooperation on the peace process will continue as before. The cabinet was also told that it can be assumed that the success of the moderates in the USSR will speed up the improvement in relations between Moscow and Jerusalem. Aliya officials said that there has been an increase in demand for exit visas to Israel since the coup, and they added there is great potential for aliya in the USSR's small towns.

Minister Qatzav, who has returned from Moscow, reported on his talks there and on the agreements reached for expanding direct flights to Moscow, Riga, Leningrad, and Kiev. He also said that President Gorbachev took personal interest in the details of the memorandum of understanding with Israel and ordered that it be pushed forward.

Religious Affairs Minister Avner Sciaki said 70 envoys are leaving for Jewish communities in the USSR during the high holidays.

Another issue raised in the session was the water conference in Turkey. Foreign Minister David Levi reported that the Americans are active on the subject, and, if Israel is not invited, then the United States will boycott the conference.

Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan said after the meeting that Turkey's behavior shows there is no point in planning to import water from that country.

[Begin Eytan recording] Nobody has gained anything from the desire to buy water from Turkey. I do not think it wise to gamble on the Turk's good-heartedness over a long period. [end recording]

Besides those issues, most of the cabinet meeting was devoted to plans to develop the Negev.

El Al, Aeroflot To Connect USSR, Israel

TA2608141791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] In November, El Al will begin to operate two weekly flights to Moscow. That decision was made today by representatives of El Al and Aeroflot. A third flight, from Tel Aviv to Riga and Leningrad, will be added beginning early December. Our correspondent Idan Miller reports that Aeroflot will fly to Israel from six Soviet cities: Moscow, Tibilisi, Kiev, Riga, Leningrad, and Mineralyye Vody.

'Red Tape' Hinders Potential Soviet Emigrants

TA2608175391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Authorities in various locations in the Soviet Union, particularly in the Asian and Muslim regions, have begun giving a hard time to prospective immigrants to Israel applying to local immigration offices. Our correspondent Avraham Ben-Melekh has learned that OVIR [Office of Visas and Registration] in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, has stopped handling Jews. It refuses to issue them passports or to process their exit visa applications. There are approximately 50,000 Jews in Baku today, and they are anxious about their future.

In Tashkent, Uzbekistan, immigration officials have stopped processing emigration applications by Jews and have intentionally created red tape. According to our correspondent, experts believe the Jews are in danger due to the instability and the nationalist and religious trends in the USSR's Asian and Muslim regions.

Likud Delegation Reports on Contacts in Egypt

TA2608135591 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 26 Aug 91 p A8

[Report by Menahem Rahat]

[Text] Muhammad Basyuni, the Egyptian ambassador to Israel, yesterday said that the visit of the Likud Young Guard members delegation to Egypt had been a success and had contributed to the chances of achieving peace in the Middle East. He said this in spite of the frank and clear positions the Likud members presented in Cairo. Basyuni said: "The first visit by the Likud to Egypt contributed to the establishment of a bridge of peace between Israel and its 21 Arab neighbors."

Gil Samsonov, the chairman of the Likud Young Guard delegation, briefed Prime Minister Shamir and senior Likud officials on the visit and said that the main message the Egyptians wanted to deliver was that the Likud is considered a legitimate player by Egypt. The Egyptians, Samsonov said, have reached the conclusion that peace related issues can only be discussed with the Likud "and not with Peres, Rabin, Der'i, or Beilin." He asserted that the Egyptians had also made conciliatory statements toward Shamir, who is considered to be the only man who can advance the peace process. "Although we did not raise the issue of his invitation to Egypt," Samsonov noted, "our hosts stressed that he would be a welcome guest at any time, and they emphasized that no conditions would be placed on the visit."

Other members of the delegation also informed Likud officials of their impressions. David Mena', the director general of Employment Services, reported that Dr. Yusuf Wali, Egypt's deputy prime minister and secretary general of the ruling party, vehemently condemned the PLO and Libya, Iraq, Sudan, and Jordan—the four Arab countries that expressed support for the conspirators in the Soviet Union. Wali described the PLO as "those fools."

In a meeting with Mena', Wali said: "I told President Mubarak that he should only hold contacts with Shamir. He is a strong, wise, and clever man. I know that there has been a dramatic change in Mubarak's thinking over the past few days and that he also understands that now. Please give Mr. Shamir my warm regards. Tell him of our desire for peace, as well as our assessment that the PLO and al-Qadhdhafi will not be able to halt progress toward peace."

Mena' told Wali that there were also other opinions in Egypt, such as those of Dr. Farhum, professor of genetics at Alexandria University, who told the delegation at a meeting that Egypt demands the right of return for the Palestinian diaspora. Wali replied: "I do not understand that man. Is he mad? Does he want the PLO in the process?"

Wali told the delegation members that President Mubarak has been receiving a daily report on the delegation and the exchange of views between its members and Egyptian officials. During the meeting with Wali, the Likud delegation gave him an official invitation for a reciprocal visit to Israel by a delegation from the ruling party in Egypt.

In a private meeting with members of the delegation, Dr. Wali said that the PLO was "a passing episode," and that Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi was "a puppet with no influence."

Wali told Yosi Eshel, the director of the Dead Sea Works, that "al-Qadhdhafi was a plaything." He told Re'uven Shalom, the director of the Jewish quarter development society, that he believed the Likud would be in power in Israel for a long time and was the only party to discuss peace with. He condemned "the PLO and its lies" and expressed complete derision for 'Arafat.

The delegation bid an emotional farewell to Dr. Wali at Ambassador Efrayim Dowek's private residence. David Mena' told him: "Dr. Wali, we simply love you."

Tehiya official Avi Farhan yesterday told the Likud delegation: "You have blown it again. This visit only caused harm to the Likud and to the State of Israel. You did not convince anyone. When will you stop grovelling before others?"

New Demands 'Might' Hold Up Conference

TA2708071291 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Aug 91 pp A1, 8

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Israeli demands recently outlined in an a document presented to the United States might hold up the convening of the peace conference slated for October. In the document, the United States is called upon to commit itself to a long list of principles which it has so far opposed.

Secretary of State James Baker's agenda for the coming month is packed and does not leave him much time for shuttle missions, which would be necessary to close the gaps between the United States, Israel, and the Palestinians. Baker is due to leave next month for a tour of Latin America and then to participate in the UN General Assembly session where he will confer with Foreign Minister David Levi. At this stage, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir does not intend to leave for Washington before the planned opening of the conference. The White House, on the other hand, has not sent an invitation to Shamir to meet with President Bush.

One of the clauses in the Israeli document says that "the United States will be an honest broker. It will take into account the fact that Israel will be facing the Arab states on its own; therefore, it will oppose the presentation of positions that Israel objects to." The United States is

called on to recognize the fact that the 1967 borders are not defensible and to provide a guarantee about the significance of the Camp David accords. Another clause says that the United States must pledge that Jerusalem will never be redivided, but it is not called on to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the city. In most of these clauses there is no identity of views between Israel and the United States either on the contents or the wording.

Another demand raised by Israel is that the USSR establish full diplomatic relations before invitations to the conference are sent. That demand might delay the convening of the conference because, by the time a new government is formed in Moscow and it takes time off to deal with the issue of improving its ties with Israel, many weeks are expected to pass. Up to now, Israel has demanded that the USSR set up full diplomatic relations before the conference is convened and not before the invitations are sent, which is supposed to happen in the coming weeks.

Another controversial clause is the one calling on the United States to acknowledge that the sides involved have different interpretations of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The Americans reject that demand because they are concerned that it might be seen as legitimizing the Israeli interpretation that their reference to withdrawal from territories does not need to apply to the West Bank and the Golan Heights. It appears from the document that, at the conference, Israel is prepared to give the right of speech to representatives from the United States, the USSR, the EC, and Egypt, but not to observers from the United Nations and the Gulf states. Israel agrees that any accords reached in direct talks could also be ratified by the Security Council.

In the document, Israel calls on the United States to ratify the May 1983 agreement with Lebanon, but Washington insists that accord was intended to be implemented alongside the overall Israeli pullout from Lebanon. The United States aspires to that and has even made a commitment to Syria and Lebanon to support their demands that the peace settlement be based on an Israeli withdrawal from the security zone. On the other hand, Israel claims that the Security Council resolution calling for a withdrawal of all foreign forces, including Syrian forces—which were supposedly invited by the sovereign Government of Lebanon—should be implemented.

A reliable U.S. source said that, in addition to the Israeli demands—though political elements in Jerusalem have made it clear that Israel's participation in the conference does not depend on U.S. agreement to all of them—Syria, Jordan, and Egypt have decided to present a demand which might make it difficult to convene the conference. The three decided that, after they send their ministers to the conference, they will link the dispatch of senior officials to the bilateral committees to the cessation of settlement activity.

The Palestinian representatives to talks with the United States told Israeli officials that they would not go back on their demand to have an East Jerusalemite currently residing in that town in the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and that they would not make do with the participation of a Jordanian resident with "Jerusalem roots." Israel included in the document it presented to the United States a clause which calls on Washington to agree that the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation not include East Jerusalemites or PLO members and a pledge that each side will not be asked to sit with anybody it does not want to sit with.

Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO executive committee, said yesterday that the PLO is demanding from the United States real guarantees that the conference deliberations will lead to a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and that, in the meantime, Israel will stop building settlements.

Syria Urged To Halt 'Anti-Israeli' Media Stance

JN2608162391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1335 GMT 26 Aug 91

["Observation" by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] Esteemed listeners: Since Damascus declared its agreement to attend the proposed peace conference, Syrian print and broadcast media have been acting as if Damascus has put Israel on the spot and thrown the Israeli Government into a frenzy and exposed the intentions of Israeli leaders. So much so as if the consent of Damascus to go the conference has thus left Israel with one of two choices: Either accept the peace conditions or face the entire world—or other such demagogic bunk.

One cannot escape the impression that the rulers of Damascus h[illegible] set out to advance apologies for their assent to participate in the peace conference and portray it as if it were a stroke of genius, designed not so much to promote peace as to embarrass and confuse Israel. Not content with that, Syrian media are now playing another discordant note. Israel, they contend, is out to subvert the opportunity to make peace that has presented itself and seeks to thwart the peace conference itself. Even worse, the Syrian media persist in referring to Israel in such cliches as the Zionist enemy, the Zionist entity, the Zionist enemy leaders in Tel Aviv, among other such demagogic terms. Consider, for instance, yesterday's editorial in the Damascus daily AL-THAWRAH: The enemy leaders continue to pile obstacles and act so as to torpedo the opportunity for peace. Keeping up its perversity, the Damascus daily goes on to maintain that Israel wants the international efforts to collapse so that the peace process would lose momentum. This is not, however, to call the Syrian president's peaceful intentions into question; he is held to be a sober and wise ruler. Any wise ruler, Arab or non-Arab, who really cares for the true interests of his people and ranks human life above all other values, is necessarily an advocate of peace and coexistence among nations and religions. The

discordant tunes played by the Syrian media and their anti-Israeli demagoguery, however, are bound to leave observers at a loss to decide whether the rulers of Damascus are genuine in their support for peace, or whether they are oblivious to their media's antics. If the Damascus rulers are truly inclined toward peace, they ought to instruct the members of their state-run media to also follow the path of peace. They cannot fail to realize that the negative, destructive line of the Syrian media is at odds with their orientation toward peace. Neither can they miss the point that the desired peace is not just a flowery slogan, or that peace cannot possibly be obtained in a vacuum, and that it has to be won in the hearts and minds of everyone involved.

It has been said that war and peace begin in the mind. The persistent anti-Israeli line pursued by the Syrian media, which continue to foster hatred between Arabs and Israelis, is hardly a sign of good faith. Nor does it bode well for the future or lend itself to a psychological climate nurturing tolerance and peace.

Argentine, Romanian, Italian Officials To Visit

TA2608095391 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Aug 91 p A1

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Argentinian President Carlos Menem will come to Israel on an official visit at the beginning of October, during which he will meet with several senior Israeli officials. This will be the first visit by an Argentinian president to Israel, and Jerusalem is attaching much importance to the visit, especially considering the special relationship between Menem, who is of Syrian origin, and the top political echelon in Damascus.

Israeli President Hayim Herzog was Menem's guest in Buenos Aires two years ago, and Menem promised to use his connections in Syria to improve the plight of the Jewish community there and to secure permits allowing the Jews to leave.

Romanian President Ion Iliescu and Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis will visit Israel next week. Preparations are underway at the Foreign Ministry for Foreign Minister David Levi's upcoming trip to Nigeria in order to sign an agreement resuming diplomatic relations between Nigeria and Israel. The decision to renew relations was made in principle during the Nigerian Foreign Minister's visit to Israel at the beginning of the month.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is leaving on an official trip to Bulgaria tomorrow, and after Rosh Hashana he will visit France where he will speak before the Council of Europe. Shamir will attend the annual convention of the Council of Jewish Federations in the United States in November.

Police Release al-Husayni, 'Ashrawi on Bail

TA2608173691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The Serious Crimes Division of Police Headquarters in Petah Tiqva today questioned Palestinian leaders Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi on their alleged meetings with PLO representatives in London. They were released after two hours on bail of 5,000 shekels.

Two activists of the Kakh Movement managed to enter the building and threaten al-Husayni and 'Ashrawi. One of them, Tiran Pollack, said a group of Kakh supporters was demonstrating outside when police called them in to check their weapons licenses. The police appointed a senior officer to investigate the incident.

IDF Budget Cuts Outlined; Treasury Reacts

TA2508163191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] In a briefing to military correspondents today, senior General Staff sources said that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will cut regular defense activity in the territories, in Lebanon, in the Jordan Valley, at sea, and in the air in order to save several millions of shekels. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe has reported that those sources warned that the cuts involve a certain risk. They also said that reserve duty days will be reduced, and there will be cuts in ammunition and in the training of reserve units, but not in the positions and training of the standing army units. A cut will be made in the Artillery Corps. The number of ships and planes will be reduced.

In addition, 20 percent of the positions in the Adjutant General's Office will be cut, training facilities will be closed down, and courses will be shortened. The female soldiers' basic training period will last only three weeks. The use of simulators will be increased so as to save engine hours. Three IDF attache offices abroad will be closed, and the number of foreign workers in attache offices will be reduced by 25 percent.

Travel abroad will be decreased by 20 percent. A cut is also expected in the number of career Army personnel and the number of civilians working for the IDF. Career service personnel who are 35 or older will not be dismissed, and those who will, will receive a few months notice. [sentence as heard] There will be a cut in the number of publications, telephones, paid advisers, and construction projects. Recruits will not be engaged in activity in the territories. Some 30,000 Civil Defense personnel have already been relieved of duty, and the Army has begun to exempt from duty Civil Defense personnel who are 50 or older. The General Staff sources say they intend to cut expenses by 300 million shekels per year.

The Finance Ministry has said that, if the defense budget is not cut by 1 billion shekels, there will be no choice but to cut the National Insurance Institute's social welfare payments, the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry's

budget, and other budgets for social purposes. The Finance Ministry has also said that the Army has many layers of fat, and large sums of money could be cut from its budget.

Ahime'ir Interviewed on Election, Shamir's Views

TA2308102591 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (SHIV'A YAMIM supplement) in Hebrew 23 Aug 91 pp 11, 13

[Interview with Yosi Ahime'ir, the head of the prime minister's bureau, by Le'a 'Inbal in Jerusalem "this week"]

[Excerpts] ['Inbal] Why this talk of early elections now?

[Ahime'ir] The prevalent assumption is that the right-wing parties will withdraw from the government and that we cannot rely too much on the Alignment's safety net.

['Inbal] Does Shamir want early elections?

[Ahime'ir] Shamir himself said he will not initiate early elections. Publicly he has declared that elections should be held on time, but he will surely not be sorry, on the Likud's behalf, if they are advanced. His chances of increasing his strength and scoring a sweeping victory will be good. Shamir still lives the trauma of the 1986 Likud convention, the flying rostrum and the microphones fight [between him and Minister Levi's supporters], as well as the dispute with the constraints ministers [Levi, Sharon, and Moda'i, in the February 1990 Likud Central Committee convention].

['Inbal] The Likud gave a positive response to the U.S. invitation to participate in the peace conference and gained the support of most of the peace-desiring public. Will an interruption of the peace process not be tantamount to misleading the public?

[Ahime'ir] There will be no problem, even if elections are held a year after the regional conference, assuming this conference does indeed begin in October. The political process will continue.

['Inbal] The fear is that Shamir intends to go to the conference not to conduct bona fide negotiations, but to gain time, money, and sympathy before the substantive debate on returning the territories begins.

[Ahime'ir] Shamir is leading a peace process in good faith and without any tricks, but while doing so he is maintaining vital interests and trusting that he will not give up a single millimeter of the land of Israel. He does not intend to hand over any part to foreign hands.

['Inbal] Does Shamir intend to run in the next elections, or will he prefer to pass on the difficult, substantive questions to his successor?

[Ahime'ir] I believe Shamir will lead the Likud in the next election campaign. I expressed this assessment in one of my election rallies, and the next day, upon arriving at the office, Shamir picked on me: How do you know? Did I tell you anything? He keeps his cards close to his chest, on things like this as well.

['Inbal] When he was interviewed by LE MONDE, Shamir said: "As long as I am prime minister, there is no need to fear for the territories of Judaea, Samaria, Gaza, and the Golan." He added later that he does not know what will happen after his term in office.

[Ahime'ir] One should not understand this to mean "after me the deluge," God forbid. His meaning was that he must be followed only by a Likud person who will insist on the Eretz Yisra'el territories as he does.

['Inbal] Does he entertain thoughts about the identity of his successor? Arens, perhaps?

[Ahime'ir] Before he is confident that his successor will be as steadfast as himself, he will continue to lead the Likud. He may not have such confidence yet. [passage omitted]

"The basic assumption is that a Likud man does not give up areas inside Eretz Yisra'el, right?" Nevertheless, we did give up 95 percent of the territory in the Sinai to which UN Resolution 242 applies, right? Well, in handing over such a high percentage of the territories we fulfilled our part of Resolution 242.

['Inbal] In return for a full and true peace, with open borders and economic development and prosperity for all regional countries, will Shamir consider the possibility of returning anything? Part of the Golan, perhaps?

[Ahime'ir] Shamir believe peace can be reached without handing over territories. He is in the habit of saying: "Look at the vast USSR, with its numerous and complex problems, how it is vigorously fighting Japan over three Far East islands located somewhere at sea." The constant question is where the withdrawal will end once it has begun. I do not believe it will end at the 1967 borders. What is the entire Golan, after all? Half a percent of Syria's territory?

['Inbal] I am talking with you about a very clear scenario: a choice between coexistence and war.

[Ahime'ir] I am telling you that, if a withdrawal has begun, there is no knowing where it will end, if at all. Their demand for territory and withdrawal means non-acceptance of Israel. Their struggle against the settlements means that they do not want Jews in this "peaceful coexistence." It is the settlements that symbolize true coexistence after all.

['Inbal] Is that what Shamir thinks?

[Ahime'ir] I think so. Why could Jews not stay in Yamit at the time of the Sinai withdrawal? The very demand for the removal of settlements is antipeace.

['Inbal] Your remarks indicate that there is no intention to lead the country toward peace through concessions, that the ultimate goal is to keep the territories.

[Ahime'ir] We shall have peace and get to keep the territories as well as the Likud is not conducting end-of-season sales. We decided that we will not go beyond a certain point simply: Peace—yes; the handover of territories—no. Who said Israel should be weak and reduced in size? This arouses suspicions and doubts.

['Inbal] What if all this leads to war, to killings?

[Ahime'ir] Shamir used to say about himself that he is a man with feelings but not an emotional person. More than once, when I brought him unpleasant news, his eyes became tearful, but he would always sober up at once. He is a very realistic person.

['Inbal] If he is so realistic, how will he keep the territories and bring about peace at the same time?

[Ahime'ir] We will absorb aliyah and experience development and prosperity. The weak spirit prevailing in certain circles should be strengthened. Can one compare our current condition with that of 10 or 30 years ago? Why should we brainwash ourselves that we should give up? If we are strong and the Arabs know we insist on our own, they will not stand a chance and will agree. It is a fact that al-Asad has expressed his readiness for negotiations. The Arabs, it seems, have always gone half way toward the Likud, which stood on its own with inner conviction and calm. What country are we talking about, to begin with? The size of this country, this tiny spot rather, ranges merely from the sea to the Jordan River!

['Inbal] Has peace with Egypt not benefited us?

[Ahime'ir] The de facto peace between Israel and Jordan today is more tangible than the peace with Egypt. There are ongoing talks, on water and other issues, which I cannot elaborate on. [passage omitted]

HA'ARETZ Interviews Hamas Gaza Leader

TA2308125291 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ (weekend supplement) in Hebrew 23 Aug 91 pp 9, 11]

[Interview with Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, "Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] most central figure in the Gaza Strip" and its "chief spokesman," by Gid'on Levi; date not given, "in Dr. al- Zahhar's house in Gaza"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [al-Zahhar] Any political process should reexamine the very establishment of the State of Israel. Israel has turned means into goals. Solving the question of who to meet, for example, has turned into a goal. We, however, must start from square one. You cannot start negotiations from the last step. Israel wants the talks to start where it is most convenient for it, because it is strong, but there is no point in hiding things. We need to ask what was the basis for the establishment of the State of Israel and examine it according to international standards. Let us start with this. You tell me: What was the basis? Was it religious, historic, the suffering of the Jewish people, or something else?

[Levi] Is there anything at all that you can accept as the legitimate basis for the establishment of the State of Israel?

[Al-Zahhar] I will accept anything, but I will not agree with it. If you try to justify the existence of the state by the right of the Jews to return to their homeland, I will ask: Why the right of return to Palestine, and not Spain, for example? I am willing to accept your right to return here after 2,000 years, but then you will have to accept the Palestinian right to return after 40 years. The right of return is not a practical argument, because this would raise questions by the Australian and American natives, and the whole world would change.

The other argument for the establishment of the state could be Jewish suffering. I can appreciate such an argument, but I also appreciate the remark by Abba Eban, who said that the golden age of the Jews was under Muslim rule in Spain.

Abraham is our father, and Isaac and Ishmael were brothers. We, the Muslims, are not allowed to make distinctions or to be racists. We may eat your food and marry you. We have never committed a crime against the Jews because they were Jews. Making distinctions is not our policy. We are the ones who suffered from the hands of Israel, though we have not carried out any crime against the Jews.

[Levi] What is the point of this whole discussion? You know that the State of Israel is an irreversible thing.

[Al-Zahhar] Who said there is anything irreversible? Only time is irreversible. Nations have come and gone. All issues must be put on the negotiating table. You should remember that you will not be sitting alone by that table. Who, for example, appointed you to select the Palestinian delegation for the negotiations? By the same token, you cannot determine the issues of discussion. Yes, we want to talk about Haifa, Yafo, and Ramlah. Israel says no, that it will not talk about Jerusalem or about the Golan Heights. What will we talk about then?

[Levi] This is getting us nowhere.

[Al-Zahhar] We must find an arbitrator on all issues—just as you did with Tabah. We have to find a neutral arbitrator and accept his judgment.

[Levi] Tabah was not a matter of existence for anyone. Can the arbitrator rule that Yafo, Haifa, and Ramlah are Arab towns, or that the State of Israel should be abolished or, alternatively, that it can annex all the territories?

[Al-Zahhar] You are the representative of force, just like all Israelis. We will agree to accept any ruling by the arbitrator, and so should you. We must start everything

at the beginning, otherwise it will not be a peace process. At the most it would be a cease-fire discussion.

[Levi] What is the solution you would prefer?

[Al-Zahhar] The Palestinians have always been a part of a pan-Islamic country. Never in history had there been a state called Palestine, nor were there Syria or Iraq. The Europeans are currently setting up a single economic entity. Soon they will create a single political entity. This is the where the world is heading. We, the Arabs, share a single culture and language. The borders of the various Arab countries are not ours; they were determined by France and Britain. Abd-al-Nasir tried to establish a pan-Arab state his way, the secular way, and failed. Now, we want to try this our way. At the time, universities in Spain produced our best scientists and scholars, people who contributed to human progress. We were the avant garde of science, architecture, art, and culture. On the other hand, the system of separate states has failed completely. Economically, we have not even managed to provide for our own needs. We will open our Muslim state to all Jews and Christians. They will have full rights. There has never been anti-Semitism among us.

[Levi] What about the Jewish state and the Jews' national rights?

[Al-Zahhar] Imagine California suddenly wanting to break away from the United States. We are not talking about the destruction of the Israeli society, but of a pan-Islamic state with minorities.

[Levi] A religious state?

[Al-Zahhar] Yes.

[Levi] Democratic?

[Al-Zahhar] More democratic than the democracies. A state that would conduct itself according to the shura. Everything will be discussed.

[Levi] Will it be based on the Iranian model?

[Al-Zahhar] No, we are not Shiites. The only today country run in the way we envisage is Sudan. Sudan is very different from what is reported about it in international media. For the first time, it has managed to supply its own needs in grain. Corruption has always played an important part in starvation in various countries. Most of the people in Egypt are Muslims who believe in and support the Islamic law, but the regime there is totally secular. Their law is a combination of the French and the British laws.

Look at what is happening in Algeria. The masses support our way, and the regime is secular. There are no free elections in any Arab country.

[Levi] What is the type of compromise you would accept?

[Al-Zahhar] There is no compromise in religion.

[Levi] Will you participate in the political process?

[Al-Zahhar] We participate in all elections to the various unions. We will take part in the process, if it is genuine and is not predetermined by the United States and Israel. I have had meetings with representatives of the U.S. Consulate and State Department.

[Levi] Will you join Faysal al-Husayni in a single delegation?

[Al-Zahhar] It depends on what he says. We will first sit and talk to his men, and then we will see. If, for example, he decides that Jerusalem is out of the realm of discussion, we would get up and leave.

[Levi] It seems to me that the majority of the Palestinian population supports al-Husayni and his secular methods?

[Al-Zahhar] If indeed this is the case, we will not force people to become believers. Islam means peace. We use gentle persuasion to call on people to have faith in Islam. We will do things our way only if the majority chooses Islam.

[Levi] What is the extent of your power?

[Al-Zahhar] In Gaza, the majority supports us; a little less than that in the West Bank. There has been a major shift away from Fatah toward us over the past two months.

[Levi] Why is that?

[Al-Zahhar] Most of the residents of the territories are Muslims, and the ground is thus prepared to absorb our ideas. Corruption in the PLO and misuse of funds is moving people from them to us. We do not allow free sex or drugs. They collect money in the name of the Palestinian people and distribute it at will. For example, they have recently stopped paying the salaries of the workers of the Islamic University in Gaza. Anyone can see the failure of the other, the secular, method. The non-Islamic systems' failure is creating movement in our direction. People see that, even after all the discussions they held with Baker, nothing is happening, and they come and join us. The PLO is incapable of presenting a representative and unified Palestinian stand; the Arab countries, due to their dependence on the United States ever since the Gulf war, cannot support the Palestinians; the United States and the United Nations are not neutral. I asked Dr. Zakariyyah al-Agha about the talks he held with Baker. He told me that he asked Baker: Could you pressure Israel to at least freeze settlements? Baker told him that they cannot. Not even that.

[Levi] How should the Palestinian representation be determined?

[Al-Zahhar] Elections must be held inside and outside the territories. I have brothers in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and in one of the Gulf states. They should be allowed to take part in the elections. We are willing to tell the PLO

that we will accept the results, whatever they may be. If we get five percent, this will be our share; if we get 90 percent, we should be represented according to that figure. I know what 'Arafat will say to that: He will say that it is impossible to hold elections in the territories right now, and that we should follow the results of the elections already held in the various trade unions. Then he will suggest all kinds of unions that represent nothing, such as the Red Crescent in Gaza or the blood bank, and say that they are indicative.

[Levi] They say that 'Arafat offered you 40 percent of the seats in the Palestinian institutions.

[Al-Zahhar] We have not heard of it. He offered something like 10 percent. We have to agree on elections among all Palestinians.

[Levi] Where do you stand on the issue of murdering collaborators?

[Al-Zahhar] Executions are allowed by Islam in three cases: executions of those found guilty of premeditated murder; of those who have sexual relations outside of marriage; and of agnostics. At the same time, executions must be decided on by a supreme Muslim authority. Because there is none in the territories at the moment, I do not accept the notion of murdering collaborators.

[Levi] Do you condemn them?

[Al-Zahhar] I neither support nor condemn them.

[Levi] Why do you not condemn them?

[Al-Zahhar] If I did, I would be seen as encouraging collaboration.

[Levi] Does Hamas have a large share of the acts of resistance against the Army?

[Al-Zahhar] The authorities have enough collaborators who could answer this question. You may also ask the Shin Bet.

[Levi] Some say that, though you write the vast majority of graffiti, you in fact represent no more than 15 percent of the people.

[Al-Zahhar] This is not the time to start cutting the cake. I can only tell you that research carried out by the Islamic University in Gaza among some 2,200 people showed that 80 percent are Muslim believers, and some 58 percent favor the implementation of the ideas of Islam in the state.

[Levi] How long have you been a Hamas activist?

[Al-Zahhar] I am not an activist.

[Levi] Perhaps you could find something to talk about with extreme religious organizations in Israel?

[Al-Zahhar] We will find something to talk about with wise men. Their being religious makes no difference at all.

[Levi] Some in the PLO maintain that you have been invented by Israel to cause division among the Palestinians?

[Al-Zahhar] If it is true, than Israel has also established the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. These kind of claims show you just who the PLO is. Accusing Muslim believers of plotting with Israel is tantamount to charging that al-Husayni is an Israeli agent. I tend to believe that al-Husayni and his friends are honest people who have miscalculated. I believe that eventually, they will surrender to Israel.

[Levi] They have a leader; who is your leader?

[Al-Zahhar] The Prophet Muhammad.

[Levi] And who among the living?

[Al-Zahhar] He still needs to be elected. [passage omitted]

3 Israelis Stabbed; Bomb Defused Near Jerusalem

TA2408194791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1815 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Three Israelis, two women and a man, were waiting for a bus and were stabbed less than an hour ago on Jerusalem's Eshkol Avenue, where the city's eastern and western sectors meet. They were taken to Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, apparently with slight to medium injuries.

Our correspondent Uri Kohen-Aharonov reports that the police suspect that the stabbing was prompted by nationalistic motives. Our correspondent adds that a short while ago at the Ramot Junction, a Border Police patrol detained two Arabs whose car upholstery was stained with blood. They are now being investigated in connection with the event.

A short while ago, Jerusalem Police bomb squad experts defused and dismantled a bomb, discovered by a picnicking family near the Bet Zayit swimming pool near Jerusalem. No one was hurt and no damage was caused. The police have asserted there were nationalistic motives behind the bomb.

PLO's Policy on Conference Criticized

JN2708092291 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Aug 91 p 2

["An Issue and An Opinion" column by Salamah 'Ukur: "Why the Delay?"]

[Text] Nowadays, we hear many statements and much talk on "peace" efforts by Palestinian leaders.

Regardless of the sharp differences of opinion expressed and conflicting statements made by these leaders, it must be said in all clarity and frankness that the Palestinian people do not thus far know the position of their sole legitimate representative on the "peace" conference. That is to say, the PLO has not, up to this moment, taken a specific and clear stand on the U.S. proposals.

Even though the peace conference is scheduled to be held in October, the PLO has so far failed to take a clear and frank position on it. Likewise, it has failed to state whether or not it is ready to participate in it.

Of course, the PLO has the right to accept or reject participation in the peace conference. As for its call for the convening of the Palestine National Council [PNC] to hold consultations and exchange views on whether or not it should participate in the peace conference, it is a proper, sound, and relevant call. However, it must be noted that this call is very long overdue.

The PNC could have convened earlier to give the PLO ample time for making moves in the Arab, Islamic, and international arenas, and also to give a wider margin for maneuvering. It is well known that settlement moves are coming too fast for the Palestinians and Arabs to keep up with.

We wished that the Palestinian leaders could halt their daily and numerous statements, and give due attention to the crystallization of a clear Palestinian position agreed to serve the cause of their people and their inalienable national rights.

We wished for the Palestinian leaders to devote their efforts to closing ranks, mobilizing resources, and overcoming, or at least, freezing their differences with a view to reaching agreement on a clear and specific formula to be espoused privately and publicly without any equivocation or prevarication.

Nobody in the world can blame them if they choose to oppose the peace conference or the U.S. initiative in part and parcel, for that matter. Likewise, nobody can blame them if they choose to participate in the peace conference.

The PLO should have hastened to crystallize a collective or a semicollective stance on the peace conference, and made moves in the Arab arena, or at least with the Arab frontline states to crystallize a unifed Arab position that could be espoused during peace conference deliberations in accordance with specific working papers and joint commitments. Similarly, it could have chosen to reject participation in the peace conference in the first place.

And here, we should admit that any PLO position that might be enunciated from now on will be too late.

King Receives Note From Senegal's Diouf

JN2408131691 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received a message from Senegalese President Abdou Diouf about holding the next Islamic summit in Dakkar. The message was delivered by Mr. (Sidi Alamin Nyas), special adviser to the Senegalese president, when he was received by His Majesty King Husayn at the Royal Hashemite Court at noon today. The meeting was attended by al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court.

Industry Minister, Delegation Leave for Tehran

JN2308115591 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 23 Aug 91

[Text] A Jordanian economic delegation led by Minister of Industry and Trade 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib headed for Tehran for economic cooperation talks with Iranian officials.

The minister told the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY before his departure that relations between Jordan and Iran would witness a new phase of cooperation through the signing of new trade agreements. He said Iran was importing 250,000 tonnes of Jordanian fertilizer annually and that negotiations were under way for annual exports of a quarter of a million tonnes of Jordanian phosphates to Iran.

Political Groups' Organizing Efforts Reported

JN2108061291 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Aug 91 p 3

["First article of a four-part series" on the establishment of political parties in Jordan by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter, Maryam M. Shahin]

[Text] Amman—As Jordanian political groups prepare to formally launch parties whose members would seek election to the country's Parliament, some are struggling to define their platforms as others attempt to disengage from past political associations.

Years of underground work and organisational and financial dependence on parties in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have left their marks on the orientation of most of Jordan's political activists.

But as stipulated in Jordan's National Charter, total political and financial independence will be a main pre-requisite for the registration and legalisation of any political party in the Kingdom.

While this poses no problem for some, such as the al-'Ahd Party headed by former Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, others are evidently struggling with the new set of rules.

In a recent public dialogue held at the 'Abd-al-Hamid Shuman Foundation between nominal leaders of four parties operating in Jordan, there remained an uncertainty to what degree some of the parties would be independent.

The Ba'th Arab Socialist Party, headed by Ahmad al-Najdawi in Jordan, has had close historic links with the Ba'th Party in Iraq. The independence of such parties has yet to be established and some political observers believe that there may be clauses in the charter which would prevent such organisations from registering as Jordanian parties.

"We don't intend to allow such parties to function if they don't reform to become local parties and break their leadership links with other parties outside of Jordan," said a senior government official recently.

Parties that want to be pan-Arab in charter, orientation and financial backing will not be banned in Jordan, said the official. But they will not be able to register as Jordanian parties nor will their leaders be able to run for local offices.

While some parties will thus automatically exclude themselves for participation in the internal political arena, others have shown that they are able to change and adapt themselves to the new status quo in Jordan.

The Jordanian Peoples Democratic Party (JPDP), headed by Taysir al-Zibri, is one example of a party that has adjusted itself to the realities of the new Jordan. Founded as a result of the decision by Jordan to cut all legal and administrative ties with the occupied territories in 1988, most members of the JPDP were formerely activists with the Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

During the two hour dialogue at the Shuman Foundation, Mr. al-Zibri said that the JPDP had different domestic priorities than the party to which most of its members had been affiliated to at one point or another.

"We are a Jordanian party and as such have to concern ourselves with Jordan's economy, its health facilities, its problems of unemployment and all other issues concerning our constituents here in Jordan," Mr. al-Zibri said.

While JPDP members say that the period of adjustment will continue and that initial administrative and organisational split is difficult, group members are confident of success. At a recent rally at the Professional Union Association, the party, along with 500 supporters, celebrated its first birthday.

During the past two decades most political activists in Jordan secretly belonged to parties which were pan-Arab in character and thus had regional and unionist aims rather than concentrting on purely national and domestic interests.

Since 1957, when political parties were first banned, political activists concentrated on regional goals—the liberation of Palestine, possible federation of sovereign states in the region, etc.

But a democratic Jordan that has legally and politically disengaged itself from the occupied West Bank and that intends to follow a different political orientation from the other countries in the Arab World cannot allow for such political affiliations, political analysts here say.

"Groups with political orientations outside Jordan don't fit," said a high ranking political analyst who preferred to remain anonymous.

"Most of the political parties in the Arab World have a totalitarian tradition and totalitarianism does not belong in a democratic country," said the analyst.

Many of the political parties in the Arab World, he said, had not been totalitarian and dictatorial in their basic tenants but many of their party leaders had become dictators once they reached positions of power.

While the older and often underground parties, including the Jordanian Communist Party, had for long concentrated on regional issues and questions pertaining to Arab unity, at least one of the new parties in Jordan seems to have broken with that tradition in the Jordanian party system.

The al-'Ahd Party headed by Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali is one which has almost entirely domestic concerns. During the discussion at the Shuman Foundation, Mr. al-Majali said that one of the failures of the underground parties had been their lack of interest in domestic issues.

"We cannot be concerned in what happens next door if we pay no attention to what happens here," Mr. al-Majali said.

While verbally supporting Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine, the al-'Ahd Party would be concerned primarily with keeping the "Jordanian house in order," he said.

Development of Parties Examined

JN2208071091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22-23 Aug 91 p 3

["Second article of a four-part series" on the establishment of political parties in Jordan by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter, Maryam M. Shahin: "Constituency Formation: A Process of Political Coalition-Building"]

[Text] Amman—As the Jordanian Parliament prepares itself to discuss a draft law on the legalisation of political parties in the Kingdom, parties and political alliances are mushrooming across the country.

Working in both heavily populated urban centres as well as the rural and tribal areas, political groupings, some 40 of which are preparing to apply for legalisation, are sponsoring political debates all over Jordan.

Members of the Jordanian-Arab Nationalist Democratic Coalition (JANDA)—a coalition of 5 centrist, leftist and nationalist parties—and the Muslim Brotherhood have been the two blocs of political groups that have led mass rallies and meetings since parliamentary elections were held here in November 1989.

But as democracy slowly creeps into the Jordanian conscience, more parties and groupings are springing up, hoping to attract many citizens that have never been involved in politics.

Political observers believe that the leftist coalition JANDA could have up to 20,000 semi-active followers in the Kingdom. The number is considered large because scrutiny of political activists on the left side of the political spectrum was particularly harsh during the years now known by some political activists as "The Years of Repression," from 1957 to 1989.

There are about 9 deputies in Parliament which are members of JANDA. In addition, the coalition was recently given five seats in the cabinet of Prime Minister Tahri al-Masri.

In Jordan, as in most countries, the leftist parties champion the causes of the poor and underprivileged. Many leftist leaders believe that despite the strength of Islamist politics in Jordan, in the long term the class issues will draw greater support than salvation by religious politicians.

The Muslim Brotherhood, Jordan's most powerful Islamic party, which holds 23 of the Lower House's 80 seats, continues to call for the imposition of Islamic law.

Islamic law," says Ahmad Qutash al-Azayidah, a Lower House deputy and the group's spokesman in Parliament, "is what all Muslims want and the rule of the majority is democracy."

"We will never use illegal ways or rock the boat. We are determined to work through democratic rule," Mr. al-Azayidah told the Jordan Times in an interview.

While the popular following of both JANDA and the Islamic parties have been active since the long awaited Parliamentary elections of 1989 took place, the "silent majority" has yet to get involved in the country's new found political life.

More conservative and right of centre parties are slowly springing up among the business-oriented bourgeois and the more traditional Jordanians from the east and west banks of the river.

While few party formations have been announced during the last few years, at least one conservative party has already been formed and announced a platform.

The al-'Ahd Party, headed by retired Brigadier General 'Abd al- Hadi al-Majali, is expected to be among the leading conservative parties in the Kingdom. It has been dubbed by many opponents as a Jordanian Likud, in refenence to the Israeli right wing nationalist party. Mr. al-Majali dismisses the reference as "silly."

The retired brigadier general says that the al-'Ahd is simply a party that is primarily concerned with Jordan rather than being a primarily pan-Arab party that relegates Jordanian domestic issues as secondary.

According to Mr. al-Majali, Jordanian issues include everything that pertains to Jordanian domestic policies. The al-'Ahd will preside over a general conference scheduled for early September in which "70 prominent personalities," will study how a conservative coalition of groups, parties and individuals will unite to present their plat-forms to the Jordanian public.

Mr. al-Majali denies claims by critics that the party or the conservative coalition will be elitist.

"We intend to appeal to the masses. Our target group are those which are neither leftist nor particularly religious," Mr. al-Majali said.

"We are a secular party," he continued, "and our interests lay in developing the local economy and strengthening the countries infrastructure—that should interest all citizens."

While the conservatives have no defined coalition bloc in Parliament, Mr al-Majali said that the party had been in touch with a number deputies and that the formation of a conservative bloc of members of parliament who would be politically close to the al-'Ahd Party and the future conservative coalition was already in the process of being formed.

Its announced formation, however, could take some time, Mr. al-Majali said.

Hizballah Official's Interview Reported

NC2608151091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1310 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Interview with Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim by Basim Sa'd; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Sa'd] As Your Eminence is aware, President Ilyas al-Hirawi is to visit the United Nations and deliver a speech there, after which he will go on to Paris and the Vatican. Do you believe this tour will produce any positive results in terms of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 425?

[Qasim] Resolution 425 was formulated by the United Nations to allow Israel to implement it whenever it saw fit. The one sponsoring this nonimplementation is America, which gives Israel everything it needs to feel reassured about its security. Israel wants to sign political agreements with Lebanon first and then consider withdrawing, if these agreements do not include territorial concessions. I do not know how matters will develop.

Lebanon cannot do anything to implement Resolution 425; this requires a joint Israeli-U.S. decision, which so far does not exist. The Americans have repeatedly tried to suggest to the Lebanese authorities that they are making efforts and considering pressuring—albeit not actually pressuring—Israel, but so far they have made no commitment about implementing Resolution 425. Therefore, I believe that the tour of the president and his delegation will be merely for publicity purposes and will not produce any results.

The Lebanese Government has made a grave mistake in its political efforts to implement Resolution 425. The government agreed to attend the peace conference—naturally upon U.S. advice—without having been invited. This decision inextricably linked the Lebanese issue with the results of that conference and with the results of the bilateral and collective reconciliation between Israel and the Arabs. Resolution 425 cannot now be implemented separately from whatever agreement is reached at the peace conference.

We have repeatedly said that we are not convinced that Israel will withdraw and implement Resolution 425. Some government officials claim to have received assurances that the resolution will be implemented after certain pretexts are removed. Experience, however, has shown that this is very unlikely and that the removal of pretexts is not useful. What makes things worse now is that the implementation has been made conditional on a conference that is supposed to resolve the complicated problems of the entire region. Therefore, we see no point to this tour except to raise the issue in the media. The decision to implement Resolution 425 does not belong to the Lebanese authorities; it belongs to America in consultation with Israel. The conditions for implementation are not yet ripe.

[Sa'd] Your Eminence, there is great interest in the current developments in the south, particularly the impressive operations claimed, in most cases, by the Islamic Resistance. What do you believe is the purpose of these operations at this stage, in view of the fact that the international conference is coming up and the claims by some that a positive atmosphere exists?

[Qasim] We have stated our position repeatedly. We believe that Israel will not leave our occupied land except by force. Conferences will not expel it, while the idea of reaching any agreements with it is against our convictions. We believe that peace with Israel is a sin. Therefore, we have a policy that has proved effective in expelling Israel from a large section of Jabal 'Amil. The freedom and dignity of all Lebanese citizens is bound up in what the resistance in general and the Islamic Resistance in particular have done to repulse the occupier of this land. We have restored a measure of dignity and pride in the face of an arrogant enemy. We believe that resistance is the answer and that the contiuation of operations is part of our strategy of jihad, not a short-term tactic. The current escalation of operations is due more to technical reasons than any change of strategy, as this has not changed from the outset. We believe we have the religious duty to fight Israel until it is wiped out. We have repeatedly told the Lebanese Government that it should assist the resistance, that the Army should back the resistance, and that there is no way for liberation except through resistance.

Even those who think in political terms must understand that resistance is the main lever and the best card for expelling Israel for good. Some politicians, however, prefer the advice of the United States to ours. Nevertheless, as we have said, we are ready to continue to confront Israel even if we are left alone, along with other honorable men who share our beliefs.

Therefore, the current operations are part of our program and stem from our belief in the necessity of fighting the enemy. Conferences may be held and others may exert efforts, but we will not stop these operations because Israel can only be expelled by force. Any agreement with Israel will only bring shame upon Arabs and Muslims.

[Sa'd] Some officials claim that the resistance operations are affecting the government's political efforts to secure an Israeli withdrawal from the Jazzin area. Is this significant? Is any part of it true?

[Qasim] That is their view. When we carry out our operations, we do not consider the plans of others, but only our own program and our conviction that Israel must be expelled from all territory, not just Jazzin. If, however, they believe that their efforts will lead to Israel's and its agents' withdrawing from part of our territory, then this is positive, and we hope they will achieve it with deeds instead of keeping the issue confined to theory. Our operations are not linked to any partial solution or any plan on which agreement has been

reached with others. These operations stem from our most deeply held convictions and will escalate as far as possible, God willing, depending on circumstances and capabilities.

[Sa'd] Was there any friction between the Lebanese Army and Hizballah during the Army's operations yesterday?

[Qasim] There was no friction at all. Rather, there was a general alert caused by the tense atmosphere provoked by the Israelis and the Lahdists when they threatened the citizens of al-Luwayzah and its environs.

[Sa'd] Your Eminence, let us speak about the issue of detainees and prisoners. As you know, there have been many rumors surrounding this issue. It has been reported that Hizballah and Israeli officials met in the French capital. Is this true? It has also been reported that an agreement is in the offing to release Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd in coordination with the Iranian leaders.

[Qasim] As to your first question, the report in false. We have absolutely no links or contacts with the Israeli enemy, nor do we contemplate having any. As for the release of His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd and some detainees in Israeli prisons, we hear the same reports you do, that it is possible that an initiative, or a release operation described as an initiative, will take place in order to facilitate Perez de Cuellar's efforts. We do not, however, possess detailed and clear information on this matter.

[Sa'd] Your Eminence, is Hizballah holding living Jewish prisoners of war?

[Qasim] We have two Israeli POW's. We will say no more because to provide other details would be to give a free gift to Israel, and that is something we do not want to do. Israel must release the detainees and POW's against whom it has committed injustice without setting conditions that lack objectivity.

[Sa'd] Shaykh Shams-al-Din [deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council] announced today that he has been informed that there are no living Jewish POW's in the hands of Lebanese forces. How true is this?

[Qasim] In the hands of Lebanese forces?

[Sa'd] All forces, Lebanese and Palestinian forces.

[Qasim] Ask him about the source of his information. I do not know on what his information is based.

[Sa'd] One last question, Your Eminence. As you know, the committee representing relatives of the people kidnapped by the Lebanese Forces has been meeting with several Lebanese officials and it visited you as well. The committee has said it has evidence that some of the detainees were transferred from the Lebanese Forces center in Adonis to Israel. Can you some shed any light on this evidence?

[Qasim] Actually, some brothers and sisters on the committee showed me a dossier including admissions by the Lebanese Forces to some newspapers and statements to the effect that the Lebanese Forces were holding some detainees. There were also messages through the Red Cross dating back to the time when some detainees were held in Lebanese Forces prisons. Some witnesses have testified that some prisoners were moved to Israel under a deal between it and the Lebanese Forces. This dossier is available; you can obtain it by contacting the committee. It contains conclusive proof that a number of prisoners held by the Lebanese Forces were taken to Israel.

Actually, we were stunned by what a certain minister said during an interview two days ago. The minister claimed that all sides had said at a cabinet meeting that they were not holding any prisoners. Does this mean words alone suffice to prove innocence? Evidence exists which should have been presented to the judiciary branch or the judiciary council for a thorough investigation. The areas in which prisoners are being held should be stormed, and the sides holding them should be challenged and asked to account for their actions. In the past two months, the Lebanese Army has deployed in Greater Beirut and other areas and the government has taken charge of security in these areas. Therefore, responsibility for these detainees rests with the Lebanese Government, and it must embark on the normal and legal course of action in light of the existing evidence. A statement by a party leader who wants to evade responsibility is insufficient. There is evidence that must be investigated. This is a major crime. There are ministers in the government who are still making deals with Israel—there is clear evidence of this.

[Sa'd] The Lebanese Government has announced an amnesty—actually, it is still in the form of a bill. We have not heard Hizballah's opinion on it.

[Qasim] Hizballah issued an official statement on this matter, only a day or two after the bill was announced. Hizballah said that the amnesty was ambiguous and not worthy of the name. It gives the government a great deal of room to manuever, pardoning or punishing as it chooses. This amnesty will, therefore, become a means of blackmail in the government's hands, something it can use to take revenge on one party and absolve another.

Why should some have the power to pardon others, as if they had no sins of their own? Most of those who drafted the bill are former belligerents, and so the law actually gives some people power over their adversaries. The bill, therefore, is not fair. We believe it is a card that will be used to bring pressure on some parties, and so we rejected it and the way this issue was handled.

[Sa'd] Thank you.

[Qasim] You are welcome.

Hizballah Urges Antioccupation Demonstrations

NC2608063391 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The Islamic Resistance held a celebration in Tyre yesterday to mark the first anniversary of the death of martyr Haytham Dbuq. The celebration was attended by a large number of 'ulema and faithful Muslims, in addition to political and cultural figures.

Speaking on behlaf of the Islamic Resistance, His Eminence Shaykh Na'im Qasim said: Negotiations with Israel will neither restore the land nor preserve the rights. This is evident from the past years, in which Israel occupied new territories. All we do is hold meetings and conferences, he said.

His eminence asserted that the only solution comes through jihad and resistance, and that failure to perform that will mean humiliation and the loss of the power to restore the lands.

His eminence wondered what will happen at the peace conference, noting that Israel will discuss the issue of land to legitimize its occupation of this land. He added Israel also will discuss the issue of water resources and normalizing relations so that people can feel at ease with the Jews; and ultimately it will be easy for it to enslave the people. He reiterated that withdrawal from an inch of the occupied territories is the last thing Israel would think of.

Shaykh Qasim continued: We say frankly that certain agents are working under cover and urging the people to say to the resistance "We have had enough. Our homes are in danger." He noted that such people are not acting out of goodwill and that they are being pushed deliberately to deceive the people into thinking that the resistance is the cause of all their problems. But, he noted, the casue of all problems are those who bombard their homes and displace them.

Shaykh Qasim called for organizing demonstrations to protest the occupation and condemn those who remain silent to its attacks against the south.

'Security Official' Says Hostage Release Slated

NC2708090691 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 26 Aug 91 p 7

[Text] A prominent security official has said that on 1 September one foreign hostage being held in Lebanon will be released as part of the release process which started some time ago.

Although the official did not give details on the hostage's nationality, he has confirmed the date of the release.

Birri: Amal Possesses 2 Israeli Prisoners Remains

NC2708122091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Following a meeting with an Italian Confederation of Trade Unions delegation, Minister Nabih Birri disclosed that the Amal Movement has the remains of two Israeli prisoners. He said that Israel has asked to examine the bodies via the Red Cross. Birri said that he will allow the Red Cross to examine the bodies of the Israeli prisoners when 28 Lebanese women held in Israeli prisons are freed.

Government Forces Conduct Storming Operations

NC2508121191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] Government forces continued carrying out storming operations in Sidon for the second day today. At 1000 a joint force of the Lebanese Army's military police and the Internal Security Forces stormed several apartments in Sidon's old quarter. The operations ended at 1230. Last night the same forces carried out storming operations in the city's al-Qayya' area.

Minister Defends Operations

NC2708064991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr has said that the five Army groups engaged in storming operations in the five governorates are carrying out their work in all Lebanese areas without exception and will continue to do so for a month.

In an interview with AL-LIWA', Minister al-Murr denied that the operations are being carried out haphazardly, emphasizing that they are carried out on the basis of information about arms caches. On the basis of this information, he said, the special Army groups act and confiscate the weapons they find.

Minister al-Murr emphasized that the Army has confiscated weapons in (Qubbay').

Israeli Planes Stage 'Mock Raids' in Sidon Area

NC2508083391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] Israeli warplanes flew over the south at low altitude before 1000 today. They staged mock raids over the east of Sidon and reconnoitered the southern coast.

Hizballah Reports Attack on 'Agents' Patrols

NC2508062391 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] The Islamic resistance mujahidins staged a dual attack yesterday against the occupation forces and their agents on the Bra'shit-Bayt Yahun road.

In a statement it has issued, the Islamic resistance said that as part of its operations, in performance of the duty of liberation and of protecting the land and the people, in confirmation that the rifle is the option that has proved its worth against Israel and its agents, and in rejection of the capitulation which the United States and Israel are attempting to impose on the region, the martyrs Husayn Yasin and Jamal Fawwaz units carried out a dual attack. They detonated an explosive device under a Lahd patrol of 10 elements on the Bra'shit-Bayt Yahun road. All 10 members of the patrol were killed or wounded.

The statement added that when an agent's support patrol came to the area, another resistance unit detonated an explosive device. Five members of the patrol were killed or wounded.

Hizballah, Lebanese Army Clash in al-Biqa'

NC2508162991 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1545 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] Security sources in western al-Biqa' report that Hizballah gunmen and Lebanese Army units clashed for five hours in Libbaya today. The clash, in which machineguns and RPG's were used, occurred after Hizballah gunmen fired four RPG's at a Lebanese Army post in the town. The Army units returned the fire.

The sources said that several casualties were reported.

Jazzin Resistance Claims Attack on Lahd Tank

NC2608110391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The Jazzin Resistance Front announced that one of its groups destroyed a T-54 tank belonging to the agent Lahd militia on the Kafr Hunah junction at dawn today and that a number of personnel were injured.

Resistance Attacks Lahd in 'Fierce' Clash

NC2608082491 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] A resistance group attacked the agent Lahd militia position in Tallat 'Ayn Qinya, north of Hasbayya, at dawn today. A fierce clash ensued between the two sides involving rockets and machine guns. The shells fired by the agents on Wadi Mimas and the Hursh al-Sanawbar ignited a fire.

Israeli helicopters flew over the contact lines in the eastern sector. A number of flares were fired over Kawkaba-Hasbayya lines and the al-'Urqub villages.

Lahd Militia Attacked; Forced Conscription Begun

NC2608163491 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] In the south this afternoon, the Lebanese resistance detonated a land mine under a military truck used by the Lahd militia on the dirt road between Dayr al-Muzayra'ah and Kafr Huna. All aboard the truck were wounded in the explosion.

The Jazzin Resistance has warned all residents against traveling on the roads used by the Lahd agents in their military assignments, as these roads are unsafe.

The Israeli occupation forces this morning reopened the crossing point in Zummarayya, after which the so-called security organ of agent Lahd's forces adopted stringent security measures. The number of cars that could pass through the checkpoint was limited to 50, and Lahd security men also interrogated scores of citizens.

Citing security sources in the south, AFP said that the Lahd forces today launched a forced conscription drive in Kafr Shuba, inside the so-called security strip and threatened to use force against those who refuse to join their ranks.

According to the same sources, the Lahd forces recently beseiged the border town of Hula for 10 days when residents refused to join the agent militia.

U.S. Offer To Facilitate Army Moves Reported

NC2708093991 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 27 Aug 91 p 8

[Text] It has been revealed that the United States has notified Lebanon through Ambassador Ryan Crocker that it is willing to facilitate the Lebanese Army deployment in Jazzin and adjacent areas and to work for an Israeli withdraw, including its agents [the South Lebanese Army], from this district in return for Lebanon abandoning its reservations on its participation in the Middle East "peace conference".

Washington is suggesting that at the conference, Lebanon engage in direct negotiations with Israel on UN Security Council Resolution 425, with all the subsequent concessions Lebanon would make in connection with water resources and security in south Lebanon.

Lebanon, however, still refuses to put forward UN Security Council Resolution 425 for discussion on the basis that it has already been adopted and that it now needs to be implemented.

Junblatt on 'Conditions' for Domestic Peace

NC2508202791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1630 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Speech by Progressive Socialist Party, PSP, leader Walid Junblatt at a rally to commemorate martyrs in Baysur on 25 August—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] We have accepted peace as a result of consultations and coordination with Syria and in order to help establish a just peace. However, this peace has some conditions:

First, the assimilation of thousands of youths who served in the resistance into the Army and police ranks needs to be accelerated. To date all we have heard on this issue are false promises.

Second, we have agreed with the Syrian Arab Army and with the Syrian leadership to hand over our heavy- and medium-caliber weapons and give them to Syria, and we have informed the Lebanese military and political leadership of that fact. Yesterday, however, Army forces came to Qab'it and confiscated PSP weapons, mountain weapons. I ask the Army command and the political leadership in Lebanon the following: Is this a prelude to disarming the inhabitants of the mountain, the south, the suburb, and the Lebanese national resistance? This is a grave signal. We will not accept the disarming of all these areas. We are handing over our heavy- and medium-caliber weapons and keeping the light weapons. It is a tradition in Lebanon that people have personal weapons in their homes. We do not accept the Army, of whose intentions we are still not sure, coming to desecrate Qab'it and, God forbid, Baysur and 'Aytat. [cheers]

The third condition is a question to the government. Believe me, I am only a member of this government by chance, and you know how I feel. [cheers] Where is the Syrian-Lebanese treaty? We went to Damascus and signed a treaty. How was this treaty translated to action in the security, military, and economic areas? We are aware of the U.S. and Israeli moves and the false promises that were given to some government members about the withdrawal from Jazzin and other areas. The guarantee that we ask for is the implementation of that treaty in the security and military fields in anticipation of a future that may bring omens of war. Are some people in the government wagering on Syria's departure from Jabal Lubnan to al-Biqa' and on Israel's stay in Jazzin? [passage omitted]

We want a peace that will bring political and economic justice to our people. We expect the government to rebuild the mountain, from 'Aytat to Baysur and from Kayfun to 'Alayh. We believe these silly high-profile delegations that are being sent to Libya and the United Nations are useless. If the people are hungry, there will be no alternative but revolution. You in the government beware because the people are hungry. [passage omitted]

When we look to what happened in the world last week and see the tremendous earthquake that shook the Soviet Union, we expect storms to engulf the Arab region sooner or later. The Balfour Declaration followed the fall of the Ottoman empire. As the communist Soviet empire is collapsing, Greater Israel is being established. Therefore, let us be careful of the what the future may bring. Let us stand together, the Lebanese national forces, Syria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and all the committed Arab forces to face the coming tremors and the storms that will come from the east following the collapse of Lenin's empire.

We have stood against the adventurists who wanted to challenge the sacrifices, freedom, and democracy in Russia. However, from a position of loyalty, gratitude, and amity for the Russian people, we will not forget the support that the Russian people and the Soviet Communist Party gave the Arab people, the Lebanese people, and the Lebanese national forces. [passage omitted]

Israel Wants 'Everything in Return for Nothing'

JN2708082091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: At a time when the world community is strongly emphasizing the need to convene the Middle East peace conference on its scheduled date; namely, in October, Israeli Government quarters have begun to talk of postponement. Not only this, they have even gone as far as to say that the Arab side is not yet ready. This cunning stand is not at all strange. From the outset, observers expected Israel to pursue a policy of procrastination and prevarication, and to set impossible conditions in an exposed bid to postpone the convocation of the international peace conference as a prelude to sabotaging it. However, what is strange is that Israel is blaming the Arabs in this regard. But, it is neither Syria, Egypt, Jordan, and not even the Palestinians who are setting impossible preconditions. The Arabs sincerely, responsibly, and favorably reacted to the U.S. proposals and also to world efforts as well when the U.S. Administration committed itself to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and to the conclusion of a just and comprehensive settlement based on the land-for-peace formula. Moreover, no Arab side has declared its rejection of peace.

In contrast, Israel has repeatedly declared its refusal to withdraw from the Golan, Jerusalem, and even from any occupied Arab territory. Furthermore, Israel rejected Palestinian representation and sought to completely exclude residents of occupied Jerusalem from negotiations. It insists on choosing members of the Palestinian delegation and sets the condition that the word Jerusalem should not be mentioned during negotiations. Moreover, Israel met U.S. and international peace efforts with the building of more settlements and the construction of huge Jewish housing complexes in the heart of the occupied Arab territories. Israel is also encouraging Soviet and East European Jewish immigrants to settle in the West Bank and Golan through providing them with land and housing free of charge.

Only yesterday, the Israeli prime minister added a new condition to his previous conditions; namely, the resumption by the USSR of full diplomatic ties with the Zionist entity before the international peace conference convenes. The Zionist blackmail is without limits. The U.S. Administration has offered immense financial and economic enticements to push Israel toward peace. Moreover, the USSR announced that it will resume its ties with Israel once the latter takes positive and real steps toward peace. As for Europe, it has expressed its readiness to provide the region with enormous aid if a just and comprehensive peace is realized. However, Israel seeks to obtain everything in return for nothing. It wants an additional $10 billion in U.S. aid, more sophisticated U.S. weaponry, immense European economic assistance, and Soviet recognition, as well as the occupied territories, at a time when it refuses to concede a basic right for the Arabs and the world community as well; namely, withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967.

If we were to review international developments over the past few years as well as current developments, we would find that the whole world is demanding self-determination for peoples, away from pressures and coercion. Even Israel itself is demanding that the right to self-determination be granted to remote countries, such as the Baltic countries, at a time when it refuses to grant the Palestinian people, who have been suffering under the yoke of occupation for scores of years, this very same right. We do not believe any people in the world have sacrificed, struggled, and fought as much as the Palestinian people. If scores or hundreds of fighters vindicating freedom and the right to self-determination fell in some countries, the Palestinian people offered scores of thousands of martyrs, wounded, and detainees at the altar of freedom. Regardless of this, the Palestinian people are denied the right to self-determination; and Israel expropriates their land to settle Jewish immigrants. With each passing day, the Israeli occupation authorities perpetrate scores of crimes in the occupied Arab territories against the freedom-fighters there. Freedom is indivisible. When Israel professes to be concerned for freedom in faraway countries and denies the Palestinian people their freedom, it effectively confirms its enmity toward freedom, all human accomplishments, and international principles. As for Israel's efforts to postpone the peace conference, it is one more attempt to consecrate the occupation and the policies of annexation and displacement. The world community has no choice but to confront and thwart this attempt and to impose its will regarding freedom, self- determination, and the inadmissibility of acquiring lands through force and war. Otherwise, it will lose its credibility; the law of the jungle will prevail; and falsehood will triumph.

Daily Says Israel Disdains International Law

JN2608151391 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0730 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] Damascus, 25 Aug (SANA)—In a commentary today, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that the Israeli enemy leaders are acting as a harmonious orchestra to abort the peace opportunities and make the world lose any hope for the emergence of any other opportunities.

The paper notes that Israel deals in complete contempt of international legitimacy and its resolutions, and carries out policies which contradict even its declared stands agreeing on participation in the international peace conference.

The paper says that, day by day, Israel is showing more intransigence and inflexibility which should confirm to the world that it is not interested in peace, and holds international legitimacy and its laws in contempt.

The paper adds: The enemy leaders, particularly the fanatics among them, try to impose or set the horizons for settlement in light of their dreams and illusions to establish Greater Israel, which does not only mean continued occupation of the Arab territories, but also the desire to usurp and occupy more territories within an integrated framework of expansion and aggression against the Arabs.

Concluding its commentary, the paper warns the world community against ignoring Israel's aggressive policy and that it might lose its credibility if it turns a blind eye to Israel's positions and practices. The paper wonders if this community would accept a retreat in defeat in the face of Israeli arrogance.

Israeli Moves To Delay Conference Viewed

JN2608134791 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: When it came to realizing that the convening of the Middle East peace conference has become inevitable, given international pressure and after the Arabs have denied Israel the opportunity to obstruct the conference by accepting the international efforts and by doing their best to make them successful, the Israelis today started to play another game and started raising the idea of postponing the conference under various and never-ending pretexts.

After Zionist Prime Minister Shamir announced last week that he sees no reason to confirm that the conference, called for by the Moscow summit, will convene at the scheduled time, Israel began to attribute reasons and justifications to Shamir's government and suggest that what has just happened in the Soviet Union constitutes sufficient cause to postpone the conference to a date in the unforeseeable future. This is taking place at the time when the majority of international powers have announced that there is no reason to postpone the conference and that last week's events in the Soviet Union will not affect international efforts to convene the conference and achieve peace.

Additionally, Moscow, which has already emerged from last week's crisis, has not said or hinted in any of its political statements that there has been any change in its policy on the Middle East and its position regarding the peace process. Nor has Moscow said anything to suggest that its preoccupations would now prevent it from paying attention to the current movement toward peace in the Middle East.

What then makes Israel use the events in Moscow as a pretext, on behalf of the Soviet leaders, to hinder the peace process and postpone the conference to an unknown date? If Israel's objective behind all these pretexts—and we believe this is the objective—is to erase the idea of the conference and open the doors of the Middle East to further conflict and war, then what happened in the Soviet Union recently will not be Israel's last pretext to postpone and obstruct the conference. Israel may soon resort to the pretext of early elections, and may ask us and the world to wait until it makes up its mind on the basis of such elections so that it can enter the conference with clear opinions and aims. At a later date, Israel may resort to the pretext of U.S. elections and Washington's preoccupation with arranging its new administration so that it can have enough time to pay attention to the peace process and sponsor it, together with the Soviet Union and other powers participating in the peace conference.

What Israel is now searching for is very clear to all those who know Israel's intentions, maneuvers, and their overall hatred of peace: Either the peace conference will be hindered and its ideas canceled once and for all, or, as the Israelis' illusions make them believe, the international climate will change and the pressure against them will be lessened—a pressure which Israel fears may result in its having to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and return rights to the Arabs. Will Israel win, or will the world refuse to go along with it as it heads toward burying all of the world's hopes for peace and security in a region whose peoples deserve to live in a climate of security and enjoy the air of peace?

Israel's Position, Calls for Pressure Assailed

JN2308150591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Aug 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Arab contacts and consultations on the proposed peace conference are continuing. President Hafiz al-Asad has sent a letter to President Husni Mubarak to this effect; King Husayn has held lengthy talks with President al-Asad in Latakia on the regional situation, as well as current endeavors to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement. The United States, despite its recent preoccupation with developments in the Soviet Union, has also stressed its determination to continue the peace efforts and convene the conference on time, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Following the end of the crisis in the Soviet Union and the return to normalcy, we can confidently say that Moscow will join in international efforts to render the desired peace conference a success and impose the will of international legitimacy, as it enjoys weight on the international level and a high standing among the Arabs.

All circumstances are ripe for realizing a just and lasting peace settlement by way of an international conference. We say it is an international conference since it truly is international, because it will convene under the auspices of, and with the effective participation of, the two superpowers and in the presence of the United Nations and the EC. Also, its main aim is to apply the Security Council's resolutions.

No one doubts America's desire to settle the Middle East dispute. Also, no one doubts the honest Soviet and European willingness to bring justice to the Palestinian Arab people, free them from the fist of Israeli occupation, and return the occupied Arab territories to their real owners. This does not mean that the United States has abandoned its special relationship with Israel or that Europe has severed its ties with Israel. The Americans and the Europeans, however, know for sure that Israel's policy is an adventurous, short-sighted one that exposes world peace to the most serious dangers and regional peace to a real threat. Moreover, it severely harms Western interests in general and international credibility.

The Gulf crisis has revealed the facts to many people around the world who have realized that Israel could not be a policeman for the West. On the contrary, it is a burden for the West. Regarding international law and the Arabs' cooperation to apply that law, no one can deny that Israel has encroached on international law for more than 40 years, and that there is every need to apply international law to Israel. This necessitates the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, which have been shelved for decades.

Hence, international efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East are serious this time because the opportunity is a historic and rare one. Yet, Israel has not retreated one inch from its aggressive, expansionist policy, despite its qualified agreement to the UN proposals. It now wishes to postpone the international peace conference by pursuing a policy of procrastination, setting conditions, and concentrating on procedural measures rather than essentials, pending a chance to undermine the conference at its roots.

It is natural that the Arabs, who have responded sincerely and honestly to the international efforts and who are eager to hold the peace conference on time, can do nothing but warn the international community of Israel's procrastination and demand that strong pressure be placed on the Zionist entity. The Arabs will undoubtedly lose if Israel's procrastination succeeds, but the international community will certainly be the biggest loser if its credibility completely collapses.

TISHRIN Views Israel's 'Chronic Hostility'

JN2708070191 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0330 GMT 27 Aug 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Israel's Chronic Hostility toward Peace," the newspaper TISHRIN says: The objectives of the proposed peace conference have been defined very clearly; the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for Israel's withdrawal from all occupied territories. Israel has no other choice in accordance with the two UN Security Council resolutions. The Arabs will adopt a unified position on demanding the Israeli withdrawal. The Arabs will not relinquish rights or land. They will defend all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, especially since the Arabs have committed themselves to peace and its requirements.

Reviewing Israel's stands, TISHRIN says: It is clear that Israel's practices, whether on the level of repressing the Palestinian people, or on the level of placing obstacles and setting conditions, are aimed at undermining the peace conference before it is convened. In fact, Israel is waiting for an appropriate time to disavow the peace process as a whole and to reject the U.S. proposals. Had Israel really wanted peace, it would have expressed its readiness to withdraw from the occupied territories.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: The peace conference will expose to the entire world Israel's fascist and aggressive face and its chronic hostility toward peace and toward the principles of right, justice, freedom, and democracy. Consequently, this gives the international community a special responsibility toward a serious aggression that has been continuing for more than 40 years against the Arab nation and the international legitimacy.

Afghanistan

Yeltsin Invites Mojaddedi for Talks

BK2708105691 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 27 Aug 91 p 1

[By Dewan Zaharul Haq]

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 26—Reliable diplomatic sources confirm that President of the Afghan Interim Government Sebgatullah Mojaddedi has received invitation from the Russian President Boris Yeltsin for talks to bring the Afghan crisis to an honorable and principled end.

They further confirm that Soviet leadership has taken the irreversible decision to terminate all support to the illegal and unpopular regime of Najibollah.

A dramatic breakthrough in the Afghan impasse is expected, as the invitation coincides with the forthcoming tripartite talks amongst Iran-Pakistan-mojahedin groups, scheduled to start in Tehran on Aug 28.

The Pakistan team is being led by the Secretary General Foreign Office Akram Zaki and for the first time includes formally, an ISI [Inter-Service Intelligence] component too.

3 Mojahedin Groups To Boycott Tehran Meeting

BK2608161191 Hong Kong AFP in English 1549 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Aug 26 (AFP)—Three Afghan resistance factions are to boycott the meeting in Tehran this week of Pakistan, Iran and mojahedin groups, the Afghan News Agency (ANA) said on Monday.

The agency said those planning to boycott the meeting were the Hezb-e-Eslami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Hezb-e-Eslami headed by Mawlawi Yunis Khalis and Etehad-e-Eslami led by Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, who is also prime minister in the rebel Afghan Interim Government.

The meeting is due to begin in Tehran on Tuesday.

Sources in the Khalis and Sayyaf Camps confirmed the boycott of the meeting by their factions. ANA, which is run by the [name indistinct]-e-Eslami, said the conditions placed by the [word indistinct] for attending the meeting had not been met.

Hekmatyar had demanded that the Iran-based factions meet prior to the Tehran talks to put together a plan for the political solution of the [words indistinct] issue and to constitute joint delegation under a [word indistinct] leader.

He had also demanded the withdrawal of what he called "special privileges" extended to unspecified rebel groups.

The Tehran meeting follows a conference held Islamabad late last month by the two countries and eleven mojahedin groups including the Iran-based Shiite [word indistinct

The conference endorsed the May 21 UN proposals for resolving the Afghan problem as a possible basis for settlement provided Afghan President Najibolah was removed from power.

The U.N. blueprint proposed an intra-Afghan dialogue to set a transitional administration in Kabul pending elections and formation of a government acceptable to the Afghan people.

ANA said the boycott would "eclipse the outcome of the Tehran tripartite talks."

The secretary general of Pakistani Foreign Ministry, Akram Zaki, is scheduled to leave here early Tuesday for Tehran, accompanied by an officer from the military Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) representatives of mojahedin.

Rival Rebel Groups Reportedly Clash in Konarha

LD2408220591 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Heavy clashes that have been occuring for some time in some districts of Konarha Province between the extremist groups of Gulbuddin and Jamilorrahman have turned into regular frontal fighting across the province. The BAKHTAR military section reports: In the course of the clashes which have entered the third week, hundreds from the belligerent groups who are engaged in fighting to capture each other's positions and bases, have either been killed or injured. According to the most recent reports, Gulbuddin groups succeeded in capturing positions and bases of the rival group in an area between Pasa Nanwa in Sarkani district and Pol-e Nawabad over the past three days. In clashes over the past three days a large group headed by Shah Mohammad, a ringleader for Jamilorrahman, who was armed with heavy weapons and armored vehicles, has been taken prisoner by the Gulbuddin group. International sources report that clashes between rival groups in Konarha Province have been very heavy and there is no sign of an immediate cease-fire between them.

Reportage on Mojahedin-Kabul Forces Clashes

Fighting in 3 Provinces 23 Aug

BK2308144291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 23 Aug 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of continued heavy fighting between mojahedin and Kabul regime

forces at various places of Zabol, Qandahar, and Helmand Provinces. Nearly 100 Kabul forces were killed when mojahedin attacked a military camp at [name indistinct] town along Qandahar-Herat Highway.

Further on 'Severe Clashes'

BK2408160491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of severe clashes between mojahedin and Kabul regime forces in a number of provinces including Lowgar, Qandahar, Herat, Baghlan, and Parvan. Mojahedin say that they shot down an aircraft of the Kabul air force when it was bombing the liberated areas of Lowgar Province. Mojahedin also shot down a warplane near Qandahar airport. Reports say the mojahedin attacked the Bagram air base in Parvan Province with artillery and rockets during which 30 soldiers were killed and a similar number of military (?jeeps) destroyed. The mojahedin attacked Kabul regime posts in (Goldoi) District of Herat Province, killing 14 soldiers and militiamen on the spot.

11 Missiles Hit Kabul Environs

LD2408162191 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] The warmongering extremists today fired 11 surface-to-surface missiles on Kabul city. One of the missiles landed on residential areas injuring one of our compatriots.

The BIA [BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY] military section reports that the missiles were fired from a northeastern direction. Ten landed on agricultural and nonresidential areas, which fortunately did not cause any losses of life or financial damage.

The missiles were of the Sakr type, which have been put at the disposal of the extremists, against all the international norms and standards, by Pakistani militarists, to kill our compatriots.

Mas'ud Threatens To Blockade Kabul

BK2608111791 Hong Kong AFP in English 1057 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 26 (AFP)—Afghan resistance leader Ahmad Shah Mas'ud threatened Monday to blockade the capital Kabul unless the government halts aerial strikes against civilian areas in the north and northeast.

Mas'ud, head of the resistance supervisory council, said ongoing strikes since August 16 had left hundreds of people dead and wounded, most of them women and children, in areas bordering the Soviet Union.

The supervisory council has so far "refrained from blocking the strategically important Salang Highway" along which food and fuel are shipped from the Soviet Union, he said in a statement received here.

"Closing this bloodline to the regime would have serious repercussions for food supply to more than two million inhabitants of Kabul," the statement added.

Mas'ud, 38, said a government air strike Sunday on Taloqan, the capital of Takhar Province which his faction controls, killed "a large number of civilians, mainly women and children," in their homes.

These "sudden, intensive and indiscriminate bombardments" began a few days before the failed coup attempt by communist hard-liners in the Soviet Union, he said, adding that it remained unclear whether any connection existed.

The bombardment "reveals the character of the communist regime, which was thought by some to be reconciliatory," the statement said, adding "the communist regime in Kabul has come to its end."

Mas'ud leads so 10,000 mojahedin resistance fighters in northern and northwestern Afghanistan, where he recently took control of more territory bordering the Soviet Union. (?A few) weeks ago he announced a direct agreement with Soviet border guards, who feared mojahedin infiltration into Tajikistan.

Mas'ud is relatively independent from the Pakistan-based Afghan resistance factions, some of whose leaders have criticized him in the past for failing to organize a blockade of Kabul despite having the means to do so.

In the statement, the council rejected Afghan President Najibollah's assertion that the bombardments were justified because they were aimed at munitions dumps.

The statement said there were no munition dumps in Taloqan as the mojahedin could easily store arms in the surrounding mountains.

Forces Attacked at Pol-e Charkhi

BK2608154191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say the mojahedin attacked Kabul regime forces at the Pol-e Charkhi area of Kabul, killing 45 soldiers and wounding many others. They also destroyed some Kabul regime military bases. The mojahedin inflicted heavy casualties on Kabul forces in another attack on Kabul regime security posts in Aibak, the capital of Samangan Province.

Golboddin Group Purchases Missiles

LD2308235991 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Aug 91

[Text] A blowpipe type surface-to-surface missile and four surface-to-surface Sakr-30 missiles were purchased by the organs of the Ministry of State Security today in Maydan Shahr from groups belonging to the fundamentalist Golboddin group. The price for the missiles has been paid to the opposition side under the decree.

Najibollah Gives Independence Day Speech

LD2508040491 Kabul BAKHTAR in Pashto 1130 GMT 19 Aug 91

["Speech by Esteemed Najibullah president of Afghanistan, on the 72d anniversary of the country's independence]

[Excerpts] Kabul 19 August BAKHTAR—In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Dear compatriots, sisters, and brothers: Seventy-two years ago the free- born Afghan people tasted the fruits of sacrifices and heroism of their children. They officially declared the independence of the country that had been lost as a result of repeated aggressions and invasions by the British state. Since that day the people of Afghanistan, as members of a united family, mark the festival of freedom in honor of this great legacy of their forefathers. The independence festival, as a political and moral aspiration, is worthy of honor and respect for all Afghans wherever they may be, because the children of all tribes and nationalities, families of the Armed Forces, social organizations, youths and intellectuals—briefly, children of all Afghan families—struggled for regaining and safeguarding the independence of our beloved homeland.

Allow me on behalf of the state of the Republic of Afghanistan to congratulate you all, sisters and brothers, Afghan refugees and other Afghans residing in Europe, America, Iran, Pakistan, and other countries on the 72d anniversary of the beloved homeland.

Life proved that Afghans learned that lessons of freedom, independence, and social justice from their fathers and forefathers. Afghans truggled for safeguarding national honor, freedom, and territorial integrity. The spirit of freedom, the safeguarding of dignity, and protecting historical and national honors has been left as a legacy from the great deeds of our outstanding pioneers to the children of the Afghan nation.

An outstanding characteristic of the Afghans, from invaders of the past until the present time, is that strong personalities moved forward and raised their strong (?resistance) against aggressors in the long history of our people's struggle. This clear characteristic of the Afghans has become richer as a result of inspirations and lessons from Abo Muslim Khorasani, Taher Poshanji, Mir Ways, Ahmad Shah, and thousands of other worthy sons of this land.

The history of national resistance movements in Afghanistan against foreign domination is indicative of the fact that this land of the brave never succumbed to invasions by aggressors, but, in the last analysis, faced them with fatal defeats. The courageous resistance of the people of Afghanistan during the three Anglo-Afghan wars in the past was the manifestation of love for freedom of our people. This courageous nation sings the anthems of courage of Mir Masjidi Khan Kohestani, Wazir Mohammad Akbar Khan, Nayeb Amanollah Khan Logari, Abdollah Khan Achkzai, Mir Bacha Khan Kohdamani, Mohammad Osman Khan Parwani, Mohammad Jan Khan Wardag, Mola Moshk-e Alam, Ghazi Mohammad Ayub Khan, Ghazi Amanollah Khan, and thousands of other heroes in its difficult days and struggles for its safeguarding. The bearers of swords and pen in the fields of wars of independence live forever. Their deeds are and will be inspirations to the children of defenders of the homeland. In reference to the history of our epics against the enemies, we learn that in difficult days, Afghans—in particular national strugglers and defenders of a united Afghanistan, have set aside all their past differences and antagonisms in confronting foreign aggressions—and have, unitedly, displayed the national will of Afghanistan. [sentence indistinct]

Our country's independence, which we have honored for 72 years, is once again threatened in a different form. No Afghan son and no claimant of the legacy of the sacrificers of wars of independence will allow themselves to ignore the defense of the country's independence for even a moment. [passage omitted]

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA], which was formed in January 1964 and was renamed the Watan Gond [Homeland Party] in July 1990, placed freedom, progress, independence, and patriotic ideals as its aims. It pursued and sought ways toward the realization of the ideals of pioneers of freedom through parliamentary marches, demonstrations, and street protests.

Fundamental political, social, and economic changes should have taken place in the life of society, and the aims of the freedom-lovers and constitutionalists should have been realized in the course of more than a decade. Unfortunately the state of the Republic of Afghanistan engaged in the armed defense of the country's independence and territorial integrity as a result of resistance against change and, in particular, foreign provocations. The continuation of war and provocation from abroad increased every day and brought about innumerable problems and suffering. The state of the Republic of Afghanistan comprehensively assessed national situations and international developments and declared the policy of national reconciliation in order to bring about national accord for putting an end to war and establishing peace. The primary aim of the policy of national reconciliation is the restoration of peace in the country. This policy, as we all know, opened its way toward peace and the cessation of war despite war-mongering positions taken by the extremists.

Now, when we are marking the 72d anniversary of our country's independence, we deeply think about the suffering that has been imposed on our people during the past decade and, through reference to the wisdom and traditions of the Afghan people, come to the conclusion that Afghans are able to solve the problems of their common home by turning to their customs. Afghan could and should be able to find an Afghan solution to the many problems of Afghan society, and thus to take

away the heavy burden of sufferings from the shoulders of our compatriots. The only way that prepares the ground for ceasing war and establishing peace in Afghanistan is an accord of all Afghan political forces to agree on a mechanism for restoring peace.

It should be stated clearly that if Afghans themselves, in particular Afghan political forces, as followers of the traditions of their forefathers, do not unite around our national and historical values such as independence and territorial integrity and do not seek together a peaceful way for solving their problems, no country could offer to find a way for bringing about peace. It is Afghans and Afghan political forces that should trust each other in order to put an end to war and bring about lasting peace with joint efforts.

We have put forward more than 30 peace proposals during the years of the policy of national reconciliation. The Republic of Afghanistan, through pursuing the policy of national reconciliation and efforts toward the establishment of peace and the cessation of war, feels (?positive) results of various degrees; however, as developments indicate, due to nonpreparedness and lack of dynamism of those forces who seek a military solution to the question, arriving at satisfactory results for the establishment of peace needs further work and more time.

The Republic of Afghanistan took a number of necessary measures toward establishing contacts with the opposition, among which are the signing of the Geneva accords, the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, the approval of the Constitution, the elimination of one-party power monopoly, the revival of parliamentary activity, economic and political pluralism, nonpartisan judiciary and prosecutor system, the convention of grand assemblies, and the adjustment of social and economic systems to national to national traditions.

The Republic of Afghanistan gained necessary experience toward the formation of a broad-based coalition administration. In order to show goodwill, thousands of opposition prisoners have been released. A series of legal and organizational measures have been taken toward facilitating the return of refugees. However, the opposition, in particular the extremists, have not only not reciprocated even one step, but with the withdrawal of Soviet forces—which was considered the basis and main reason of war in Afghanistan—have intensified military, economic, and political pressure. Interference by warmongers and intervention from abroad intensified vis-a-vis our goodwill toward strengthening mutually beneficial relations. Without doubt our independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national unity for the celebration, of which we are gathered here today, came under threat under such conditions.

Our people were subjected to greater hardships as a result of pressure by the extremists on some provinces, cities, and highways. The state concentrated all its efforts and resources on combating the military-economic pressures by the extremists—as a consequence of which, fortunately, the independence and territorial integrity of the country was defended.

Respected friends, a political solution through an agreement by Afghan political forces has now become a powerful inclination despite the continuing military pressure on the state of the Republic of Afghanistan and despite the irresponsible stances of the extremists, which is an obvious threat to the country's independence and territorial integrity. In addition, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar recently announced a five-point draft under which the independence, territorial integrity, national sovereignty, nonalignment, and Islamic character will be protected in order to succeed in achieving a peaceful political solution in Afghanistan. As a first supporter of the UN secretary general's plan, the Republic of Afghanistan believes that as a result of the realization of this plan through an accord by the Afghan forces, not only the common home of Afghans will be saved from those threats facing its independence and territorial integrity, but suitable grounds provided for competing forces in Afghanistan toward their coordinated efforts for establishing peace.

In the opinion of the Republic of Afghanistan, the draft of the UN secretary general, which has been supported by various Afghan personalities and by parties involved in the question of Afghanistan, has laid a reliable foundation for a political solution to the question of Afghanistan. Emphasis has been put on the commencement of talks between Afghan forces in order to reach a final decision on the draft. This is a time when all doors are open for a peaceful settlement on national and international levels. Emphasis on a military solution or the negation of peaceful ways by this or that force not only delay the restoration of peace in the country, but all suitable opportunities provided by a number of Afghan political forces as a result of the sound and realistic approach by a number of countries involved in the Afghan question as well as by the UN good offices will be lost. We hope all Afghan political forces—in particular those who declare themselves supporters of a united, independent, and territorially integrated Afghanistan—will take practical steps toward implementing the UN peace plan. The opponents of the Republic of Afghanistan who, except the negation of a number of political forces, have not put forward even a single proposal. They have taken a series of ambiguous stances vis-a-vis the UN secretary general's five-point statement. Some have rejected the principles enshrined in this statement. Such stances have no result except wasting suitable opportunities for peace, the imposition of further suffering on the people, and the continuation of further destruction in the country.

Dear compatriots, 72 years have elapsed since the independence of the country. In this period the people of Afghanistan have acted as a united nation and have enjoyed the fruits of freedom. We see that the people of Afghanistan have suffered many hardships when we look

at the history of our country's social life. However, the problems to which our country is presently subjected are far greater and more severe than in the past. The First and Second World Wars—unprecedented in their destruction and loss of life—lasted nine years, but this sorrowful bloody war has tortured the souls of our people for 13 years. Every Afghan family, in one way or another, has been affected by this war. The country has taken [word indistinct] from the war and has lost great human and material resources. The prevention of further human and material damage and thousands of other grave consequences could only be achieved through political and peaceful solutions, which are within the reach of political forces and to which greater necessity is felt. Those in favor of war and emphasizing the continuation of military pressure, [should know] that war cannot solve even the smallest problem; it only weakens and brings more destruction the united, independent, and free country of Afghans with every passing day. The war did not succeed in solving a single problem in the past 13 years; it will not do so in the future either.

The establishment of peace in the country is passing unconditionally and without reservation to a political solution. The Republic of Afghanistan has put forward its proposals on ways toward general elections on the basis of democracy. I hope these will by realistically studied by the sides concerned. Following the resolute will of the people of Afghanistan, we will pursue the policy of national reconciliation, the primary aim of which is the restoration of peace in order to safeguard the establishment of peace and freedom and protect the country's territorial integrity.

We support direct and unconditional talks with the opponents of the Republic of Afghanistan, because setting conditions is only the putting off the talks. While talks go on at various levels with some opposition groups, others have certain reservations. I propose to them that talks should start between the representatives of the state and opposition in the presence of a third party; that is, the Republic of Afghanistan is ready to talk to the opposition through the mediation of (?the countries interested in resolving the Afghan problem on the basis of the UN plan. This act will widen talks on the the proposals of the two sides.) We also propose that credible clergy from inside the country and credible Afghan clergy based in Iran and Pakistan and neutral personalities (?shall hold a meeting) anywhere the opposition proposes, and exchange and bring closer the views and stances of both sides. If the opposition agrees with this, they shall publish the names of the clergy and personalities in their publications; and the Republic of Afghanistan will act in similar way and will take practical steps through related channels to arrange this meeting. We are also ready to embark on a similar action and use the same method with internal commanders who have shown interest in talks for the cessation of war and the restoration of peace in their areas. Now that war has been prolonged and has taken on devastating dimensions, waiting and watchng by political forces and personalities who can be effective in accelerating a political solution can be considered an unkindness to the country and compatriots. We notice that Arabs and Israel eventually agreed to talk to each other to resolve their issues of dispute, which war has failed to do. Unfortunately, the opposition of the Republic of Afghanistan is still not ready to talk to and have understanding with their brothers, who say the word of God and follow the holy Koran. More interesting is that the oponents of the Republic of Afghanistan approaches the Soviet Union, which is a foreign side of the issue, rather than talking to the state of the Republic of Afghanistan and the country's existing political system. [Words indistinct] we wish that the oposition of the Republic of Afghanistan would, in the light of new international situations and taking into account the existing realities of our society, waste no more time, so that we reach the goal which entails the prosperity of the Afghan people and the safeguarding of the independence of the country. While the war has hurt the family of every Afghan directly or indirectly and has opened before all of us a frightening prospect, pinpointing those responsible for war while war continues is impossible. Let the war end; then all issue can be taken under consideration.

Over the past five years we proposed talks and peace; the other side, while insisting on military solution, has no right to put the responsibility of war on the shoulders of others. Afghans will not forget the role of those who, at this difficult time in their lives, take even one step for the cessation of war and who save the life of even one compatriot. We will not for a moment abandon the national reconciliation policy; we will search for all opportunities and possibilities to resolve, through peaceful political means and understanding with opposition forces, problems of the country; and we wish the opponents of the Republic of Afghanistan, with consideration to their national and historic obligations, would take the same course.

Dear compatriots, the state and Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has taken advantage of existing very small capabilities for setting up projects benefifical to the public and to help private enterpreneurs to set up productive projects despite economic problems and the shortage of essential material for production. For instance, over the first five months of the current year, 14 schemes in the state sector and 23 private projects were set up and started production. We welcomed these efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan Government and of the prime minister and wish him more successes in the development and progress of future activities of the government. The state of the Republic of Afghanistan will in future carry out a series of measure in the economic field. The strengthening and development of the private sector and its activities, enhancement in agriculture, commerce, transport, and construction rest at top of the tasks of the Republic of Afghanistan. The state has taken action to transport and store material of primary need of the people in the coming winter, and will escalate activities of the related ministries in this respect. The setting up of fast-producing projects and

factories—by the state or private sector, independent or joint; the securing of foreign investment; helping farmers; all-out efforts to revive economic projects; and securing aid from countries and UN organizations for reconstruction of Afghanistan will be accelerated. While socioeconomic measures of the Republic of Afghanistan conform with present situation and demands and with the interests of the people of Afghanistan, political-economic pluralism, [words indistinct] and the division of social and state position will be based on the power and capability of parties and organizations.

The greatest aim of the Republic of Afghanistan is to protect and strengthen pluralism, to ensure free activity of parties, to seek political solutions and to move to democracy, while measures will be taken to strengthen discipline and prevent the activities which push the country toward national disintegration. The socioeconomic policy of the Republic of Afghanistan is based on the national interersts of Afghanistan, and doubtlessly it includes the interests of every social strata and nationality. The aim of state measures in all directions is to serve Afghans regardless their nationality, religion, group, or tribal links. The aim of those measures shows that we want peace for the people of our society. We want the dear country of all nationalities, tribes, and clans to remain united, stable, and independent, as it used to be. While we do not forget serving the people and our compatriots for a single moment, we defend with all our strength our country's independence and territorial integrity and material and moral values.

Dear friends, the Republic of Afghanistan seeks to fulfill its tasks in the frame of requirements of interstate rights on the basis of peaceful coexistence and development of mutual relations with all nations, especially the neighboring countries. We want the development of economic, cultural, and political relations and links with all countries on the basis of equality of rights and mutual respect.

The Republic of Afghanistan has many times expressed its strong wish to normalize relations with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. We believe that not only is the existence of a stable Afghanistan no threat to our neighbors and to Paksitan, but this will play a valuable role in the establishment of permanent relations with that country. We would like to note strongly that economic cooperation, not military rivalry, between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is in the interest of the peoples of the two countries and peace and security in the region. We hope diplomatic statements of that country on the UN secretary general's five-point plan and political and peaceful solution of the Afghan problem will be coupled with practical steps' and, as a first stop, it should put an end to the efforts of Pakistan's military, which instigates the extremists for the continuation and intensification of war.

As a neighbor and as a country which has ancient historic relations with Afghanistan, Iran—enjoying respect among the opposition—can play an important role in encouraging the opposition to a political solution. We hope the leadership of Iran will play an effective role in the just solution of the Afghan problem.

We welcome the goodwill efforts of Iranian authorities toward finding a peaceful solution to the question of Afghanistan. There are good possibilities and great reserves in the two brotherly countries of Afghanistan and Iran for economic, cultural, and social links in the interest of both our peoples. We desire greater utilization of these reserves.

The Soviet Union, after the independence of our country, as our first neighboring state, has not spared any cooperation in the economic, social, and various fields of life of our people. We welcome the consistent efforts of the Soviet Union toward the establishment of peace and the reconstruction in our country. We believe the efforts of this country, as a guarantor of the Geneva accords and supporter of the five-point plan of the UN secretary general, are in the interests of peace and security in the region.

The Republic of Afghanistan has traditional historical relations, and they are consistently consolidating them. India is helping Afghanistan in various economic, cultural, technical, and scientific fields. In consideration of traditional historical links, we desire further cooperation with that country. We hope the Republic of India will help us more than in the past in our search for the establishment of peace in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has had friendly political and economic relations with the PRC. We [desire] that the efforts of that country will speed up toward the search for a political solution to Afghanistan, the revival of its projects of the past, and opening new projects.

Taking advantage of improved international relations, the Republic of Afghanistan has shown ever-readiness for establishing good relations with the United States. We hope the United States, as a guarantor of the Geneva accords and supporter of the UN secretary general's five-point plan, will help in the political solution for Afghanistan. This will prepare the ground for good relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and that country.

Afghanistan is an active member of the Islamic countries, the Nonaligned Movement, and the United Nations. In the future, too, it will make necessary efforts toward observing peace and national and international pledges.

On this day when our people are celebrating the 72d anniversary - of the country's independence, I address all patriotic people of Afghanistan:

The protection of independence—this great legacy of our forefathers, for the restoration of which great many sacrifices have been made and blood shed—is the duty of all of us in these critical moments. It is our duty to show the national wisdom and national will of our fathers and

forefathers toward safeguarding the country's independence and territorial integrity.

Heroic armed forces and courageous defenders of the homeland! The homeland is deeply grateful to you that you have fought with bravery for the well-being and peace of the people, and for your epics in defending the country's independence and territorial integrity. Do not let the security and peace of your countrymen be disturbed or the national independence and territorial integrity of your homeland be threatened. The Republic of Afghanistan makes requisite efforts, within its possibilities, to strengthen the defense forces of the country and to look after the members of the armed forces.

Noble compatriots, respected friends, brave and gallant Afghans, independence is the valuable legacy of every one of us. Afghans have never let their independence be compromised. We have learned this lesson from our fathers and forefathers, who fought wars of liberation by sacrificing their belongings and lives. The state of the Republic of Afghanistan, whose main and fundamental activities' pivot is the safeguarding of Afghanistan's independent and free identity, believes that with help of God and the support of the freedom-loving people, Afghanistan will overcome present problems and will reach along with the people its goal, which is the cessation of war and the restoration of peace. We believe that freedom-loving and brave Afghans have the capability of standing against foreign interference and aggression. I would like to reassure respected compatriots that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan and its honorable armed forces will in future, too, resist and defend against military pressure of the extremists. Over the past 72 years our country enjoyed independence. We strongly wish to restore peace and profoundly start the reconstruction of our war-stricken country in the light of this great blessing of humanity—independence. I ask God to help the Afghan nation in the immediate restoration of peace and in the reconstruction of its historic, independent, and noble country. And success comes from God.

Khaliqyar Chairs Council of Ministers Sessions

Reports on USSR, Oil Sales 22 Aug

LD2208233191 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Aug 91

[Excerpts] The prime minister's press office reports that esteemed Republican Prime Minister Fazl Haq Khaliqyar chaired a general session of the Council of Ministers in the prime minister's palace this afternoon on recent developments in the USSR.

Esteemed Khaliqyar described the logical, sound stand taken by the state and Government of the Republic of Afghanistan on events in the Republic of Afghanistan's great neighboring country and added that the state and government of the Republic of Afghanistan follow attentively the recent events and hope the Soviet people overcome their difficulties fully.

Esteemed Khaliqyar added that, considering that esteemed Najibollah's interview explained the Republic of Afghanistan's official stand and that the Republic of Afghanistan is really able to follow a logical and correct path regarding those developments as a neutral and nonaligned country and within the framework of the national reconciliation policy, at the present, too, it expresses hopes for the normalization of the neighboring country's situation. Having stressed the importance of the role of the members of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan in this sensitive moment to fulfill important, national, and historic tasks, esteemed Khaliqyar added that it should be said that our country goes through sensitive stages. Each one of you has a very important role in this stage: to accelerate the duties entrusted on you. You should carry out your upmost efforts to fulfill better those social and economic commitments which lie before the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

Esteemed Khaliqyar instructed the relevant ministers to complete productive and economic projects and to take measures to purchase, provide, import, store, and offer primary goods, especially wheat, coal, fuel, and crude oil.

Esteemed Khaliqyar commissioned the minister of light industry and foodstuff to accelerate the process of transportation of 50,000 tonnes of wheat, the assistance of India to Afghanistan, and to take immediate action to purchase 150,000 tonnes of wheat from the country, which has given a cheap and favorable offer.

Esteemed Khaliqyar instructed the trade minister to encourage the national entrepreneurs and private investors to import and sell fuel freely and, after consulting and negotiating with them, prepare the grounds for registering the proforma for the import of fuel and accelerate the measures.

Esteemed prime minister commissioned the minister of mine and industry to accelerate further the process of extraction and transportation of coal and crude oil and take additional measures and put them into practice.

According to an instruction by esteemed Khaliqyar, the aforementioned ministers should report on the next general session of the Council of Ministers about their accomplishment concerning the import of wheat, encouragement of the private investors to offer and sell fuel, and acceleration of the process of the extraction and transportation of coal and crude oil.

Reports on Economic Situation 26 Aug

LD2608222991 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Excerpts] The prime minister's press officer reported to BAKHTAR that a general session of the Council of Ministers was held today under the chairmanship of esteemed Fazl Haq Khaleqyar, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, in the prime minister's palace.

The council assessed preparations to supply better wheat, fuel, crude oil, and coal to the compatriots. The council also approved a number of legal documents including a law on provisions for the maimed and injured, captives, missing persons, and martyrs' families.

At the beginning of the session, esteemed Khaleqyar informed the members of the government about the military-political and economic situation of the country. [passage omitted]

Esteemed Khaleqyar told the Council of Ministers about the highways that remain open and transportation conditions.

In connection with the economic situation of the country, esteemed Khaleqyar said that, despite the financial and technical problems and limitations, the measures taken to supply wheat, fuel, crude oil, and coal to the compatriots have made some headway. So far, contracts have been signed to purchase 80,000 tonnes of fuel from abroad by the private sector; this is in addition to state fuel contracts. The activity of the private sector in this sphere is continuing. A contract to create a joint enterprise, (Finga) Limited, has been signed between Farid Naser Limited, from Afghanistan, and a Soviet firm in order to produce liquid gas in Balkh province. It will start production within the next three to four months and will produce liquid gas for around 4,000 to 5,000 cylinders daily. These will be made available to the Kabul citizens and other compatriots in the northern region of the country.

The process of extracting and transporting coal is also going on well. The purchase of wheat from within and outside the country is continuing. The result of the working visit of an Afghan delegation to the Soviet Union was satisfactory. In addition to the 50,000 tonnes of wheat in aid from India, which will arrive in Afghanistan soon via the Soviet Union, around 30,000 tonnes of wheat have been purchased from the surplus of the agricultural products of the peasants inside the country. As this year the harvest is favorable, it is planned to purchase around 200,000 tonnes from inside the country.

Esteemed Khaleqyar assured the private businessmen and entrepreneurs who import fuel that the government not only will not interfere in the provision, import, and distribution of fuel but will render assistance to the private sector too.

Then, based on an earlier instructions by the esteemed prime minister, the ministers of mines and industry and light industry and foodstuffs gave separate reports to the Council of Ministers about measures taken and implemented by the relevant departments to provide facilities to supply wheat, fuel, crude oil, and coal. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Foreign Minister Leaves for India 26 Aug

BK2608142591 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman left for New Delhi Monday on a three-day official visit to India. He is leading a four-member delegation. During the visit, Mr. Mustafiz will have wide-ranging talks with his Indian counterpart Madhavsinh Solanki covering the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Regional and international issues of common concern and outstanding bilateral disputes will also come up in their talks. Two agreements are expected to be signed during the foreign minister's visit. A convention will be signed on avoidance of double taxation.

Talking to newsmen at the airport shortly before his departure Monday, the foreign minister said he sees brighter possibilities of solution to the issues of Tin Bigha Corridor. He said he is optimistic that the settlement process should now become easier. Mr. Mustafiz said the visit is aimed at further strengthening the bilateral relations and finding out ways of peaceful settlement of all long-standing issues through negotiations.

Army Chief Returns Home From Malaysia 25 Aug

BK2608140091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Nuruddin Khan returned home Sunday after a goodwill visit to Malaysia. He led a military delegation. During his stay in Malaysia, Gen. Nuruddin Khan called on the defense minister, the chief of defense forces, and the chief of army staff of Malaysia and discussed matters of mutual interest. He also met Prime Minister of Malaysia Mahathir Mohamed and visited military training institutions and other military establishments.

India

Remarks by U.S. Envoy to Pakistan Criticized

BK2708090691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Opposition members in the Lok Sabha expressed their serious concern over Pakistan's efforts to internationalize the Kashmir issue and the illegal border crossing, particularly of Bangladeshi nationals. Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Mr. Rabi Ray, Janata Dal, and others referred to the anti-India stance at the recent conference of the Organization of Islamic Countries and the statements by the U.S. ambassador in Islamabad and the British shadow foreign secretary [Gerald Kaufman] who visited India recently.

Parliament Members Discuss Soviet Developments

BK2608151191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Members in the Rajya Sabha cutting across party lines welcomed the return of Mr. Gorbachev to power and hailed the role of Mr. Boris Yeltsin in foiling the coup. Some opposition members also criticized the government for what they called its delayed response to the events in that country. They also alleged that the government showed a lukewarm treatment to such an important development. Members belonging to the Left parties alleged that certain forces are trying to weaken the Soviet Union. The issue came up through a special mention raised by Mr. Rajmohan Gandhi, Janata Dal. Several members associating with the issue demanded a statement from the government on these developments and a full-fledged discussion on the issue.

Commentary Terms Pakistan Envoy's Visit 'Futile'

BK2608121691 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Commentary by S.K. Naiyer, All India Radio news commentator: "Futile Visit of Pakistan Envoy to India"]

[Text] Through Pakistan foreign secretary's four-day visit to New Delhi last week with so-called special message from Pakistan prime minister, Mr. Shaharyar Khan tried his diplomatic best to create an impression of a coming golden dawn in India-Pakistan relations. In a press briefing, he would try to show that his visit is a sincere and genuine attempt at building a new future. He knew he had to reckon with skepticism in Indian minds, admitted that such sentiments had also been expressed before, and, therefore, he added an assurance that Islamabad's sincerity this time would be demonstrated on the ground within days of his return to Pakistan. Such statements though sound sweet, yet are not worthy of belief and as the proverb goes, the proof of the sweet pudding is in the eating.

Pakistan's loud pronouncements both at the national and international platforms and through diplomatic exercise have not been backed by any sincere efforts to stop proxy war. On the contrary, the pronouncements of normalization of relations with India have been backed by a bitter bite of renewed violence and enhanced aid to the extremists in Pakistan bordering states of Punjab and Kashmir. The watchers of India-Pakistan relations in India as well as abroad have no reason to see the change of hearts in the Pakistani leadership. Hence, the loud and vocal statements have not cut ice with anyone, much less with India.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan's visit and the loud pronouncements if have to create any hope of reversing the trend in India-Pakistan relations for the betterment of the people of the two countries, it must put an end to encouragement being provided in various ways to the militants in Punjab and Kashmir. An end to the proxy war Pakistan has been waging against India through the insurgencies fomented in Punjab and Kashmir can be a quick and very convincing proof of the new orientation in Pakistan's policy toward India Mr. Shaharyar Khan talked about this time. The level of hate and violence is sure to fall dramatically in Punjab and Kashmir if only the militants there are not allowed to draw rifles from the dumps in Pakistan. The hopes created by Shaharyar Khan's statements have been belied by a subsequent reported statement of Pakistan Premier Nawaz Sharif that assistance to extremists and secessionists in Kashmir would continue.

The sincerity of Pakistan's attempt to normalize relations can be well seen by the fact that over 2,500 Sikh militants and about 10,000 Kashmiri youths have since been trained by Pakistan in the last four to five years. It is estimated that over 200 Sikh extremists and over 8,000 Kashmiri militants have returned to India only last year after training with firearms. The world opinion about Pakistan's sham show of sincerity for a dialogue with India has been well exposed. Even USA and UK have gone on record to tell Pakistan repeatedly and in more than clear terms that it must stop supply of arms and training to militants.

There is no use denying Pakistani incitements to terrorism in India. The Pakistani press makes interesting revelations. One newspaper reported on 1 August on the efforts of Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan at forging collaboration between the terrorists in Punjab and Kashmir in the pursuit of such objectives as assassination of General O.P. Malhotra and Mr. Jag Mohan—former governors of Punjab and Kashmir. According to this report, Jamaat-i-Islami had also arranged for arms training of the Punjab and Kashmir terrorists with Hezb-i-Eslami of the Afghan mojahedin led by the very controversial Golboddin Hekmatyar.

The Indian defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, on Saturday reiterated that India was willing to bridge all differences with Pakistan provided it shows a serious intention of normalizing relationship by putting a stop to training and equipping Kashmiri youths. India is ready to extend her hands of cooperation even though Pakistan had been endeavoring to internationalize the Kashmir imbroglio, forgetting that Pakistan is an aggressor on Kashmir and is an illegal occupant of a big chunk of Kashmir territory. There is no compatibility in the deeds of Pakistan and the constant proclamations it is making from time to time. The real purpose of Mr. Shaharyar's visit this time seems to have been finalization of agenda for a meeting between the prime ministers of India and Pakistan when they are both in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare for the Commonwealth conference in October. The effusiveness of Mr. Shaharyar was his way of upgrading his visit.

Defense Minister on India-Pakistan Relations

BK2508034791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] The defense minister has said Pakistan should stop aiding terrorist activities in Punjab and Kashmir if it wants to normalize relations with India. Talking to newsmen in Poona, Mr. Sharad Pawar said during the recent visit of Pakistan Prime minister's special envoy Mr. Shaharyar Khan, he was shown evidence of Islamabad's direct involvement in such activities.

Pakistan Spokesman Clarifies Kashmir Statement

BK2408162691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] A spokesman of the Pakistan prime minister has claimed that the statement made by Mr. Nawaz Sharif on Kashmir in a recent interview to an American weekly was not meant to be a threat of war against India. The spokesman told the AIR [All India Radio] Islamabad correspondent that Pakistan wants to resolve all outstanding issues with India peacefully through negotiations in the spirit of the Simla Agreement.

Comment on Pakistan Aid to Kashmir, Punjab Rebels

BK2408092291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] vice president, Kishen Lal Sharma, says that India must respond in a befitting manner if Pakistan continues its hostilities toward the country. Talking to newsmen in Bhubaneshwar, he said Pakistan is continuing its aid to the militants in Punjab and Kashmir.

Mr. Sharma said that his party is opposed to any move to denotify elections in Punjab.

Commentary Sees Pakistan Behind Kashmir Terrorism

BK2508113391 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Commentary by Jamanadas Akhtar, member of Press Council of India]

[Text] Democratic organizations fighting for the protection of human rights the world over should face the situation created by terrorists and their patrons. Rulers, who aim at annexing other states, resort to naked aggression, train misguided young men for sabotage and terrorism, supply sophisticated weapons to them and encourage them to kiil and kidnap innocent persons. If the affected governments takes appropriate action against terrorists, these rulers assume the (?garb) of defenders of human rights and start condemning action against the terrorists. Unfortunately, this is happening in Kashmir.

Our neighbor Pakistan attacked Kashmir in October 1947, 1965, and 1971. Every time it denied the charge of committing an aggression. In 1972, the Pakistan Government agreed to abide by the Simla Agreement that envisaged the settlement of the problem by mutual negotiations without the interference of any third party and got back lost territory and about a 100,000 soldiers as prisoners of war. In fact, the late Mr. Z.A. Bhutto had realized that the only question that has to be solved was the future of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir territory. Unfortunately, Pakistan has kept its ill-repute of defying all efforts of understanding. Free flow of sophisticated weapons from foreign powers for Afghan rebels helped Pakistan to amass these weapons, enabling it to organize armed terrorist groups to indulge in killings and lawlessness in Kashmir. More than 100 such small and large groups were organized. The largest gang is controlled by Jammat-i-Islami under the assumed name of Hizbul Mujahidin. Ikhwanul Muslimeen, which is another name of Jammat-i- Islami, and had recently kidnapped Mr. K. Doraiswamy, the executive director of Indian Oil Corporation. The Ikhwan set him free after securing the release of five notorious terrorists involved in the kidnapping and killing of Professor Mushirul Haq, vice chancellor of Kashmir University, and Mr. A.H. Khera, general manager of HMT [Hindustan Machine Tools]. Earlier, the kidnappers had succeeded in securing the release of a few notorious criminals by kidnapping the daughters of the then home minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and Saifuddin Soz, an MP from Srinagar.

Much water has since flown in Jhelum. Terrorists have killed a number of innocent persons in the valley. Premnath Bhatt, a veteran scholar, was kidnapped and brutally murdered. Nails were driven into his eyes, ears, and forehead. A young married woman Girja Tikku was kidnapped, raped, and cut into two pieces. About half a dozen MLAs [members of legislative assembly] were kidnapped and asassinated. Who are these persons who are perpetrating these heinous crimes? We remember the head of one such organization had kidnapped an Indian diplomat in Birmingham. Ikhwanul Muslimeen had tried to assassinate the Egyptian President Gamel Nasser and Syrian President al-Asad. In the Indian subcontinent, this organization is called Jamaat-i-Islami. Its followers had masterminded the assassination of [Pakistani leaders] Liaqat Ali and Dr. Khan Saheb. Its terrorist gang (al-Shams) had kidnapped and killed a number of Bengali intellectuals in the last phase of the Bangladesh war in Dhaka. It assumed the label of Muslim Masyumi party in Indonesia to organize a military coup in 1956. A number of Arab countries have outlawed it and its frontline organizations. Recently Pakistan's Muhajir leader, Altaf Hussain, accused the Jamaat of having hatched a conspiracy to murder him. The Jamaat is active in Western countries under the label of International Muslim Brotherhood.

Naturally, the question now arises as to who is violating the human and democratic rights in this part of the subcontinent. To me, there is no difference between kidnapping for ransom and kidnapping for forcing the government to release known killers. World organizations fighting for human rights should raise their voice

against this barbarism. Blackmailers and murderers should not be allowed to encourage or to dictate their terms.

The question of democratic rights is altogether another subject. All opposition political parties in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir have alleged that recent elections there were rigged on a very large scale. Kashmiris living in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir observed black day and organized big demonstartions to express their indignation over the murder of democracy in their territory. The former PM [Prime Minister] Raja Mumtaz Rathore stated that Azad Kashmir was Pakistan's colony. Thousands of political opponents of the present government of Pakistan ard languishing in jails. All opposition MPs and MLAs have threatened to resign, and it is rather strange that Pakistan, which is masterminding terrorism in the valley, claims to be the champion of democracy and human rights in Kashmir.

President's Rule in Kashmir Extended 6 Months

BK2608150791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Parliament has approved the statutory resolution which seeks to extend president's rule in Kashmir for further period of six months. The current spell of president's rule is to expire on the second of next month. The resolution was moved by the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, in the Lok Sabha, and by Minister of State Mr. M.M. Jacob in the Rajya Sabha today. They told the two houses that a political vacuum still prevails in the state because of continued terrorist activities. They said the state governor is of the view that sustained pressure should continue on militants to control law and order.

4 Killed in Kashmir Incidents, Arms Seized

BK2408163091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] In the Kashmir valley, four persons including two militants were killed in separate incidents during the last 24 hours. The security forces arrested 11 suspected subversives in Srinagar and recovered some arms and ammunition.

Reportage on Continuing Violence in Assam

Former Assam Minister Killed

BK2708050691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The former Assam minister, Mr. Brahma Choudhury, was assassinated by suspected Bodo [tribal] extremists in Kokrajhar early this morning. According to police, extremists attacked Mr. Choudhury's residence with hand grenades and automatic weapons, injuring him seriously. He was immediately shifted to the hospital where he succumbed to injuries. One constable and another person were also killed on the spot.

Mr. Choudhury was also a former member of parliament and president of the (?plains) tribal council of Assam.

The Assam chief minister, Mr. Hiteshwar Saikya, has condemned the killing of Mr. Brahma Choudhury. He said that every possible step will be taken to nab the culprits.

11 Killed 23-24 Aug

BK2408094691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] In Assam, 11 people were killed by extremists in different parts of the state during the past 24 hours. Official reports in Guwahati said five unidentified bodies were found at Salana in Nowgong District this morning. Senior civil and police officers rushed to the spot. A minor girl was killed when extremists threw a hand grenade at a car in Guwahati yesterday evening. One body was recovered from under a bridge near the city. Four people were shot dead by extremists at (Mitamari) in (Sonitpur) District.

Curfew Imposed in Karimganj

BK2708013691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] In Assam, an indefinite curfew was clamped in the whole of Badarpur police station area in Karimganj District last night, following group clashes.

Our Silchar correspondent reports that 36 persons, including five policemen, were injured yesterday in various incidents in and around Badarpur town. Police resorted to lathi [baton] charge and later opened fire to disperse the violent mob. Security measures in the area have been tightened with the deployment of additional police and paramilitary forces.

Home Minister Reiterates Punjab Elections Policy

BK2408093891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] The home minister has reiterated the center's commitment to the Rajiv-Longowal accord, but said it cannot be effectively implemented unless there is a representative government in Punjab. In an interview, he also said that fresh dates for elections in the state will depend on the suggestion made by the opposition parties. He made it clear that the government is keen to ensure that the election process is not exploited by the secessionist elements in any manner.

Meets Punjab Governor

BK2408163491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] The Punjab governor, Mr. Surendra Nath, met the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, and the union home secretary in New Delhi today. He is meeting the prime minister tonight. These meetings assume signficance as

the government is keen to hold elections in Punjab. The center is also considering changes in the law to prevent those who make secessionism an election plank from entering the fray.

Our correspondent says polling in Punjab was to be held on 22d of June, but was deferred till the 25th of next month. The Congress-I which had boycotted the elections cannot participate unless a fresh electoral process is announced. This requires a constitutional amendment. Our correspondent says the government has already begun consultations with opposition leaders to evolve a concensus on all aspects of the Punjab elections.

Unrest Reported in Sindh, Punjab, Kashmir

BK2608162091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Reports from Pakistan say that large-scale rallies and demonstrations continue in Sindh and Punjab provinces in protest against the attack on the former Prime Minister Mrs. Benazir Bhutto's motorcade in Karachi recently. In Lahore, a magistrate and several policemen were injured in stone throwing during one of the protest demonstrations. The demonstrators carried banners warning Islamabad of serious consequences if the people responsible for the attack were not arrested.

In Karachi, thousands of children have held demonstrations in protest against the continued detention of the leader of the Jiye Sindh—a progressive party, Dr. Qadir Magsi, without trial. The children demanded that the influx of non-Sindhis in Sindh province should be stopped.

The dismissed prime minister of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Mr. Mumtaz Hussain Rathore, has demanded that Pakistani troops should be withdrawn immediately from Gilgit and Baltistan. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad, he said the people of Kashmir should be allowed to manage the affairs of these areas which are part of Kashmir state. In a statement, Mr. Rathore demanded that Islamabad should give royalty to the administration of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir for the electricity from Mangla Dam.

A large number of people were injured in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir during the police lathi [baton] charge on demonstrators protesting against the Pakistan prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif's, visit to the territory.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Arrives 27 Aug

BK2708020891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The Bangladesh foreign minister, Mr. Mustafizur Rahman, arrived in New Delhi last night on a three-day visit. He was received at the airport by the external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, and foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey.

Talking to newsmen at the airport, Mr. Rahman expressed the hope that his talks with the Indian leaders will be useful and will further stregthen the relations between the two countries, which are members of the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation]. Mr. Rahman expressed the hope that all the outstanding bilateral issues, including Tin Bigha corridor, will be resolved amicably.

2 Agreements Signed

BK2708133491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] India and Bangladesh have signed two agreements relating to avoidance of double taxation and extension of credit facility of 30 crore rupees by India to Bangladesh. The convention on avoidance of double taxation was signed in New Delhi today by the external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, and the visiting Bangladesh foreign minister, Mr. Mustafizur Rahman. The immediate beneficiaries of this agreement will be the airlines and the shipping companies.

The agreement on extending a 30-crore rupees credit to Bangladesh to purchase capital goods was signed by the foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, and the Bangladesh high commissioner, Mr. Faruq Chowdhury.

Commentary on IMF Loan, Payment Balance Crisis

BK2408040491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Commentary by A.K. Bhattacharya of THE ECONOMIC TIMES]

[Text] It is now almost certain that India will get the much expected loans under the Contingency and Compensatory Financing Facility [CCFF] and the stand by arrangement from the International Monetary Fund during the next two months. The RBI [Reserve Bank of India], Mr. S. Venkatiramanan, confirmed the first installment of the loan by the second week of September. What, however, he did not disclose was the fact that the loan to be sanctioned in September would actually be around $600 million under the IMF Contingency and Compensatory Financing Facility. This will be linked to the stand by loan of around $2.3 billion to be approved by the middle of October. This will raise the total IMF loan package to be released in the next two months to $2.9 billion. The duration of the IMF loan program is likely to be 18 months. India has the option of applying for a larger loan under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) of the IMF any time during the pendency of the 18-month program. But before doing that the government has to take a conscious decision on seeking such assistance.

The union finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, had indicated in parliament that the government needed the IMF support for a period of three years. Experts interpret this is an indication of the finance minister's desire

to go in for an Extended Fund Facility loan from the IMF which could be in the range of five to seven billion dollars. But going in for such a loan would require the government to agree to more stringent conditions of economic reforms. It can, thus, be safely assumed that any decision on a larger loan under EFF from the IMF would be taken after reassessing the foreign exchange requirement for the country by the end of the current financial year. It also depends on the political support the government may get from opposition leaders on this issue. As far as the CCFF and stand by support of the opposition parties in the sense that not many uncomfortable questions would be asked by them about the conditions to be fulfilled by the government for taking these loans. [sentence as heard] The fact is that the government has promised to the IMF to stick to the fiscal deficit to 6.5 percent of the GDP [gross domestic product], further restricting the money growth and bringing about economic reforms, including liberalization of the economy. It is only after such promise that the IMF has agreed to release the loan so that the government could bale itself out of the present unprecedented balance of payment crisis.

Iran

Khamene'i Denounces Middle East Peace Plan

LD2508154791 Tehran IRNA in English 1434 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 25, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i today strongly denounced the so-called peace plan for the Middle East sponsored by the United States.

"This satanic plan intends to force the Palestinian people into a compromise, in order to guarantee the security of the (Zionist) regime occupying Qods," Ayatollah Khamene'i told a group of leaders of the Islamic Jihad for Palestine, who are currently visiting Iran.

He said "under the present circumstances we should oppose the holding of this sinister conference, and defeat it through the active political publicity measures of the Palestinian people." The ayatollah urged leaders of Islamic state to declare their opposition to the so-called conference, and called on world Muslims to foil the plot with all their might.

"We will continue to stand by you. The Iranian Government and people will support the Palestinians and their strugglers," he assured.

Earlier in the day the leader told a group of Lebanese Hizballah, that the American plot cannot "disturb the realities which we have experienced and in which we have faith." He said Washington cannot settle the issue of Palestine according to its wishes. "It will stick in their (Americans) throat like a piece of bone."

The only solution is the total annihilation of the illegal Zionist entity called Israel, the ayatollah made it clear.

Terming the conference as a "collective treason" the leader said enemies are preparing to deliver a blow to the Palestinian cause. "However, they (enemies) should know that if the conference ever convenes, it will not change the situation, and the devoted faithful Palestinian combatants will continue to stay in the scene.

Vice President Habibi's News Conference

LD2608205891 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1708 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Weekly news conference by First Vice President Hasan Habibi with unidentified correspondents in Tehran on 26 August—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] Mr. Habibi, my next question is about the recent developments in the Soviet Union and particularly the demand of that country's republics for independence. It seems these developments are leading the world to polarization and ultimately to a single pole. This would pose a serious threat in the form of greater U.S. influence over the international arena and the realization of that country's objectives. What is your opinion on this?

[Habibi] We are against any polarization, be it in the form of a single pole, two poles, or many poles. If several countries were to join each other, be it in the name of Europe, America, or the Soviet Union, and if they were to make decisions on behalf of the rest of the world, we would oppose it. As you know, we have repeatedly stated in the past that we are against the existing system in the UN Security Council. You know that there is not a single pole in the Security Council and in fact there are five countries. When they agree on a point, they can impose a decision on the world; but when one of them vetoes a decision, the decision cannot be implemented. We are opposed to that too and have said it for many years. That is, we are opposed to any system in the world which seeks to impose its views on other nations. We oppose such a system whether it is made up of a single pole or two poles. You remember when there were two poles, his holiness the imam [Khomeyni] used to say: Each pole is worse than the other. This is the basic and principled stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We believe the nations should be left free to make their own decisions on domestic and international issues. Each country should have the right to form its own views on international issues in order to secure its own interests.

[Correspondent] [passage omitted] My next question: The Lebanese Hizballah has told political circles that with the release of the hostages it will lose its protective shield. What guarantees has the Syrian Government given Iran with regard to safeguarding the Lebanese Hizballah as a politico-religious group?

[Habibi] [passage omitted] With regard to Hizballah, in the discussions that we had some time ago, during our trip to Syria, with Syrian officials that count—both in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Hafiz al-Asad and also in our talks with Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Faruq

al-Shar'—issues concerning Hizballah were discussed clearly and explicitly. At that time, too, there were some difficulties concerning Hizballah and Amal. It was a serious matter and the two sides talked frankly. The view of the Syrian officials has always been that Hizballah must have a presence as a Muslim, revolutionary, and active group and nothing should hinder its legitimate and revolutionary tasks [kar-ha]. I do not think that Syria has changed its views in this regard.

Foreign Minister Comments on Current Issues

LD2508102191 Tehran IRNA in English 0708 GMT 25 Aug 91

['Excerpts' of an interview with Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati for daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI'; date and place not given]

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 25, IRNA—"Iran is against presence of any foreign forces in the region, either in the Persian Gulf or any other areas in this part of the world," Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told the morning daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI' Sunday.

Velayati made the remark in response to a question on presence of NATO's rapid deployment forces in the region and whether Iran held any talks with Turkey in this connection.

He stressed that Iran will neither allow others to violate its sovereignty, territorial integrity and rights nor it will interfere in internal affairs of others.

In reply to a question that Turkey is said to have the intention of creating a security belt in northern Iraq and Iran's stand towards it, Velayati said: "Since the very beginning of the crisis we have reiterated that territorial integrity of countries including Iraq must be preserved."

Velayati stressed that in the same manner that Iran condemned Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, it will denounce occupation of parts of the Iraqi territory, "whether it is Turkey or another country."

On possibility of Turkey misusing the critical status quo in the region, Velayati noted that the prevailing atmosphere in the world and in the region will not allow any country to embark on such adventures.

"Disintegration of Iraq will not be to the advantage of any country, even Turkey. This is our assessment of the situation," said the minister.

On proven ineffectiveness of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council in dealing with the developments of the region in the past decade, Velayati said Iran had repeatedly stated "in the absence of Iran's presence" no regional body would be able to defend security in the region.

"Therefore, they have invited us to reassess the status of the members of the council.... My understanding is that the council will remain the same but needs reconsideration. They have somehow come to the conclusion that they must seek Iran's cooperation, or else it will be impossible to defend the regional security," he said.

However, he added, "We believe an all-out political, economic, trade, technical and cultural cooperation between Iran and six littoral states of the southern Persian Gulf will immensly help preservation of security in the region."

As for proposals offered by other states, including India, to have a role in the Persian Gulf security system, Velayati said India's case must be separated from others.

He noted that India will consider the Persian Gulf as a branch of the Indian Ocean and, therefore, when they propose to play a role in the security of the region, they mean a region as large as the Indian Ocean.

"If this happens to be the case, we are not against a sort of cooperation among countries at the periphery of the Indian Ocean, including Iran. But, this does not mean that the Indians, too, become present in the Persian Gulf," he stressed.

The minister regretted that the third world countries, the Islamic world in particular, have so far failed to form a powerful independent bloc, free from rivalries of other powers.

Commenting on the U.S.-engineered "new world order", Velayati said: "The bipolar world did not last long.... We do not believe the future world will be a unipolar one.... It is a fact that the world is in need of a new order. But, the U.S.-style of the new order is something which cannot be accepted."

As for the role that the one billion-strong Muslim community can play in the new world order and whether Iran or other states have expressed any views in this respect, Velayati said this was one of the topics raised at the Ankara meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), early this month.

However, he stressed, there might be some discrepancies among the Muslim states "but this bitter reality should not hinder our activities."

Asked whether Iran will return the Kuwaiti airplanes flown to Iran by the Iraqi pilots during the Persian Gulf war, he said, "In the light of the existing friendly relations between Iran and Kuwait, we have no problem in returning Kuwaiti planes, if there is any."

"Tehran has informed Kuwait of the matter."

As for the Iraqi aircraft, the United Nations should make the decision, he said adding that there are plenty of issues to be sorted out between Iran and Iraq.

He further added that no plane, neither Kuwaiti nor Iraqi, landed in Iran with prior consent of the Islamic Republic. However, in accordance with international

regulations Iran was compelled to give emergency landing permission to the planes.

More on the same subject, he said Kuwait has informed Tehran that a number of its planes, manned by Iraqi pilots, landed in Iran during the Persian Gulf war. On the basis of investigations carried out by Iran, it has been established that a number of these planes have likely the specifications claimed by Kuwait.

On payment of war reparation to Iran by Iraq, the foreign minister said, "We are highly hopeful that the committee commissioned to investigate the article 6 of the U.N. Resolution 598 will be set up in the near future to determine the aggressor party."

He stressed that it is a well known fact that Iraq launched the 1980-88 war on Iran, a fact which was admitted by a number of states during the Persian Gulf war. However, naming of the aggressor has a procedure which must be followed up. "The whole world knows that Iraq was the aggressor party and steps have been taken in this respect." These moves must be continued in cooperation with the United Nations and the U.N. secretary general will visit Iran in a near future to discuss, among other things, the issue of war reparation, he said.

On the returning of over one million Iraqi refugees who fled to Iran in the wake of the Persian Gulf war, Velayati said the Islamic Republic continues contacts with world organizations in charge of the refugees. Meanwhile, contacts have also been made with certain countries like Syria and Turkey, also hosting the Iraqi refugees, to take a joint action in this respect. "Despite all the efforts made in this regard, I must admit that the refugees are experiencing numerous sanitary, housing, food as well as psychological and emotional problems."

On foreign assistance extended to the Iraqi refugees in Iran, Velayati told JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI that the aids have been a trifle of the needs of the refugees and the sums spent by Tehran, but that foreign aids have been coming to some extent. About dlrs. 450 million are spent monthly to cover the needs of the Iraqi refugees in Iran.

On negotiations with certain Iraqi opposition groups and the Iraqi government, Velayati said that the agreements have not been finalized. "Even if they reach the final stage, they will lack any guarantee needed in their implementation in the Iraqi Kurdistan."

Moreover, he added, according to the information available some differences have emerged among the Kurdish groups who formed an alliance and signed an agreement with the Iraqi regime. Not all Kurdish groups hold the same views. "Therefore, there is little chance that the peace negotiations between the Kurds and the Baghdad government come to something serious."

Asked whether the Iraqi Kurdish groups who are in friendly terms with Iran were justified in their negotiations with Baghdad, Velayati said after the massacre of Kurds prior to the negotiations, these groups became disappointed and were disheartened to carry on their struggle as before.

Asked about the Non-Aligned Movement and that it was gradually but steadily losing its original credit, he said:

"The Non-Aligned Movement [NAM] was born because of the presence in the world of the bi-polar system. NAM was created to embrace those countries which were not aligned with either of the power blocs. Now that the bi-polar system is non-existent we should even think of a new name for the movement as well as redefine its functions and duties.

"At any rate the essence of the situation is that the Third World countries, or the 'south' states as they call them, have common interests. If there should be an organization within whose framework they can cooperate they are certain to protect the bulk of their international interests. That is there are benefits in unity and unitedness that are absent in disunity. Now if they cannot collaborate under the Non-Aligned Movement they will do so under a different name and with new well-defined goals. The symptoms of the new mentality is perhaps already obvious in certain NAM members and evident in the talks of the officials of those states... The most crucial developments have occurred within the member states of the movement while NAM has shown the least reaction to those developments..."

On the developments in the Soviet Union and Iraq:

"As far as relates to the Islamic Republic of Iran the developments in the Soviet Union are the business of the people of the Soviet Union. We do not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of that country. We respect whatever happens to be the decision of the Soviet people. Another issue is that the strategic relations with Iran of the Soviet Union are on a good course. [sentence as received] We do not think that the current developments in the Soviet Union will leave an impact on our strategic relations.

"Another issue is that a series of factors contrubuted as a whole to the arming of Iraq to the point that she was tempted to invade Iran. One of those factors was the flow of arms to Iraq from the Soviet Union which was not the only country to bolster Iraq's military. But it is very unlikely that the same factors will again be created to tempt Iraq to threaten any of her neighbors.

"At that time there was money for weapons. Whereas for the time being one of the two principal elements (for tempting Iraq to invade a neighbor) is missing. It is estimated that Iraq now shoulders upwards of dlrs 60 billion in foreign debt as well as tries to cope with colossal problems at home. At that time the Persian Gulf states were the principal financial backers of Iraq but, as far as we know, the littoral Persian Gulf states will not want to do what they did in the past. On the other hand

there is no other country or group of countries which would want to offer Iraq financial backing in order to bolder its military.

On Iran-Egypt relations, he said: "We have an Iranian interest section in Cairo, while Egypt has its own in Tehran. That is the whole lot of it.

"Segments of the Egyptian print media have tried to blown up the reality out of its true proportions and have indicated that relations are being resumed or that the two countries have exchanged charge d'affaires. Such propaganda reflects only their needs in that respect. While certain Western states are after giving regional legitimacy to the Camp David agreement, the Egyptian print media are trying to associate Egypt with the Islamic Republic of Iran in a bid to win approval for what they have done. That is the principal idea behind that untrue propaganda.

"The fact is that the Iranian interest section has reopened. Until a few years ago we had an Iranian interest section in Cairo which did its own functions. Later on the Egyptian Government closed it down claiming that the Iranian interest section had connections with Muslim groups. On our part, we were willing to sea the reopening of our interest section. That was the long and short of it."

On the situation in neighbouring Afghanistan, the Iranian foreign minister said: "It rests with the mojahedin to decide whether they will engage in military operations in Afghanistan or not. The Islamic Republic of Iran relying on a most crucial point of its foreign policy does not in the least intend to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. We do not dictate to the mojahedin to engage or not to engage in military operations. The decisions either way is theirs.

"What was discussed at the Islamabad (quadrilateral) talks was how to consolidate the entirety of Afghanistan. Neither the Islamic Republic of Iran nor Pakistan happen to function as the decision-making party in relation with Afghanistan, and they must not. In the past we protested to the Soviets for having meddled in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and if any other country should do as did the Soviets then that country will deserve the same fault finding. Whatever they (the people in Afghanistan) decide to do we will support it, and we will consider their choice as being legitimate. But what to do rests with they themselves."

On Iran's interpretation of Syria's approach to the U.S. sponsored Mid-East peace talks, Velayati said: "In their talks with us the Syrians have disclaimed any changes in their previous position. I had talks with (Syrian Foreign minister) Faruq al-Shar'. Also the Interior Minister Mr ('Abdallah) Nuri recently visited Damascus and met with President Hafiz al-Asad and handed him a message from the Iranian president. Thus far they have told us that absolutely no changes have occurred in their position. We, on the other hand, do not insist on proving that they have changed their policies. We must wait and see what will happen in action..."

On the basis of our long relations with Syria and of our knowledge of the attitude of the Syrians we only hope this time, too, it will be like it was on similar occasions in the past. Our own position towards Palestine and the United States is only too clear..."

On the situation in Lebanon, he said: "As far as we know the Muslims and combatants of Lebanon are determined to continue their resistance in southern Lebanon. Israel cannot keep southern Lebanon under its occupation and support a bunch of mercenaries there, and at the same time remain protected from the attacks of Lebanese. On the other hand the Lebanese combatants are ideologically aligned with the Palestinian strugglers. As long as Palestine continues to be occupied the Lebanese combatants will be a principal backing to the Palestinian strugglers."

On the issue of hostages and Iran's role in securing their release, Velayati said: "Both the Lebanese and other countries have regularly requested us to offer any humanitarian aid (for solving the hostage crisis) as we can. We have said that we are opposed to kidnapping of any sort and that all hostages, including the Lebanese hostages in Israel, should be set free.

"The secretary general of the United Nations has now opted to intercede, and we think he is perhaps the best personality for the task, which fact will dispel any would-be conjectures. This way the issue becomes an international issue rather a deal. We look at the issue from its humanitarian aspects and argue that all innocent people such as the kidnapped professor of Beirut University, or Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd who has been taken hostage by Israel should be set free.

"Likewise the Western circles should not allow themselves into thinking that the blood of the Westerners is worth more than that of the Lebanese. They are all humans and should be dealt with on an equal terms. The Islamic Republic cannot play a one-man show in that respect. Let the Americans and the Britons, who have a good sway on the Israelis pressure the Israeli Government to set free the Lebanese hostages in Israel, among them Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim. That is the expectation of the people of Lebanon. If their expectation is heeded then here is hope to believe that all hostages will be set free."

On the prime victims of hostage-taking the four Iranians kidnapped by the Christian Phalangists in Beirut way back in 1982, the foreign minister said: "We have always insisted that we must learn everything about our four hostages. On the basis of the original information offered us we can conclude that there are reasons we should believe they are now alive. The people who are working under the superintendence of the U.N. secretary general should inform us on the status of the Iranian hostages."

On Iran's relations with Germany and France, he said: "The problems in that area are not inherently such that may be resolved by simply making a decision, or else they would have been solved sometime during the 13 years which have elapsed since the Islamic revolution. This does not mean that the Islamic Republic is to blame for that. But rightly or wrongly there are problems ahead which would have to be solved. The goal needs patience, tactfulness, and steadfastness...

"We only hope the French will show goodwill towards us. Goodwill, obviously, is not enough when it comes to the relations between the world countries. Good management and good performance should supplement goodwill..."

On developments in Indian Kashmir, Velayati said: "The Islamic Republic of Iran maintains that such issues as that in Kashmir or in any other place of the world will not be resolved by militaristic suppression. Moreover, we, as a Muslim nation, are concerned about what happens to Muslims throughout the world. This does not mean interference in the internal affairs of other states.

"We sympathize with Muslims throughout the world and within the framework of international laws and with respect to our ideological identity with the Muslims of Kashmir we call on the Indian Government to respect the rights of the people of Kashmir. We, as well as other Muslims of the world, cannot at all condone the killing of the people in Kashmir.

"We call on the Indian Government to adopt a logical attitude in its dealing with problems and act according to humanitarian principles. I will not over-emphasize to repeat that my statement is not to be interpreted as 'interference in the internal affairs of Kashmir.'

On relations with the United Kingdom, he said: "One most prominent result of the Islamic revolution is Iran's becoming independent. As an independent government we will not allow any foreign government to meddle in the internal affairs of our country.

"Whether this or that name (Bobby Sands Street) would be a proper name for this or that street in our city (Tehran) is our own business. Our position is clear and well-defined."

Lebanese Hizballah Leaders Meet With Khamene'i

NC2508184291 Paris AFP in English 1644 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Tehran, Aug 25 (AFP) - Iranian spiritual guide Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i met here Sunday with leaders of the Lebanese Shiite movement Hizballah and said the Palestinian question could only be resolved by the destruction of Israel, Tehran radio reported.

The Hizballah delegation has been in Iran for a week and has met President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, fuelling speculation that movement on the Middle East hostage issue could be imminent. Hizballah has always denied holding hostages but is believed to be close to groups in Lebanon that have claimed the abduction of Westerners.

Iranian U.N. Ambassador Kamal Kharrazi on Saturday said the United Nations had prepared "a global plan involving the release of all the hostages," while Hashemi-Rafsanjani blamed Israel for blocking any movement on the question.

Lebanese hostage-takers, holding 10 Westerners, are demanding that Israel release some 400 mainly Lebanese Shiite prisoners it is detaining in Israeli-controlled southern Lebanon.

Israel has said it is prepared to free its Lebanese prisoners but on condition that seven of its servicemen missing in Lebanon since 1982 are accounted for. Hizballah earlier this month said it was holding two of the seven men and would be prepared to negotiate their release.

Iranian media reports have not linked the presence of the Hizballah delegation in Iran with the hostage issue. [passage omitted]

Velayati, Hizballah Meet

NC2708084491 Paris AFP in English 0815 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Tehran, Aug 27 (AFP) - Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati has held a fresh round of talks here with a visiting delegation from the Lebanese Shiite movement Hizballah, official sources reported Tuesday.

The delegation, led by Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas Musawi, has been in Iran for more than a week now, triggering speculation that momentum toward a resolution of the Middle East hostage problem could accelerate.

Hizballah officials saw Velayati on August 17 and have since then met with President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and spiritual guide Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i.

Velayati and the delegation, who held their second meeting late Monday, discussed "developments in the situation in Lebanon and occupied Palestine," according to official sources.

The deputy leader of Hizballah said Monday his movement was holding two Israeli soliders captured in Lebanon but released no information on their condition.

Israel is demanding information on the fate of seven of its servivcemen missing in Lebanon since 1982 before it agrees to free some 400 of its Lebanese Shiite prisoners. [passage omitted]

Khomeyni Meets Islamic Jihad Movement Leaders

LD2608151491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The leaders of Palestine's Islamic Jihad Movement [PIJM] were received by Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni last night. In the meeting, one of the PIJM leaders submitted a report on the latest stage in the revolutionary and Islamic struggle of the Palestinians, adding: The Palestinian Muslims' resistance entered a destiny-making stage by virtue of the unstinting support rendered by His Eminence Imam Khomeyni—may he be admitted to God's paradise—and the Islamic Republic's officials. The entire crusading forces of Palestine have constantly endeavored to implement Imam Khomeyni's guidelines. Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni, having expressed his pleasure with the PIJM leaders' visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, recounted the support extended by Imam Khomeyni toward the rights of the oppressed Palestinians. He said: Ever since the start of his Islamic and revolutionary struggles, his eminence, the imam, described Israel as a major threat to the existence of Muslims in all important speeches and statements. The imam's decisive and sustained opposition to the United States and Israel ultimately led to his exile. The imam's struggles continued in various forms throughout his exile. The struggle against the United States and Israel continued in the wake of the victory of the Islamic revolution; the all-embracing support for the frontline combators against the occupying Zionists is indicative of that fact. The formation of Lebanon's Revolutionary Hezbollah Movement and Palestine's Islamic Jihad Movement are proof of the attention given by the imam and the officials of the Islamic Republic to the relentless struggles against the Israeli regime.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni termed the struggle against the Israeli regime an Islamic and divine obligation and one of the strategic issues of the system of the Islamic Republic. He reiterated: We will stand by the Palestinian and Lebanese combators to the end and are ready to assist them whole-heartedly.

Velayati Meets Group

LD2608181991 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Excerpt] At a meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati today, Mr. Faithi al-Shaqaqi, the leader of a delegation of the Islamic Jihad of Palestine, submitted a comprehensive report on the regional situation, conditions inside the occupied lands, and the current peace conference trend.

Then, declaring Iran's all-around support for the Muslim people of Palestine, Mr. Velayati stressed: The present conditions in Palestine are more difficult than in the past. Most Arab and Muslim countries are acting feebly about the Palestinian issue. This is while the Muslim people of Palestine, particularly those in the occupied lands, continue their resistance in good spirits. [passage omitted]

Velayati, Iraq's al-Faysal Discuss Relations

LD2608175291 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Mr. Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal, the visiting deputy foreign minister of Iraq, at a meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati today announced his country's readiness to solve the existing difficulties and to expand ties.

Mr. Velayati, in reply, stated that problems facing Iraq, as a neighboring and Muslim country, are important to Iran. He said: The resumption of ties between Iran and Iraq should start by solving the outstanding problems between the two countries. The half-finished undertakings such as the exchange of prisoners of war, demarcation of borders, and dredging of the Arvand river should be completed, he declared.

While expressing concern over the pressure exerted on the Muslim people of Iraq and the violation of the sanctity of the holy shrines in Iraq, Mr. Velayati also announced the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to repair the holy places.

Velayati Receives Jordanian Trade Minister

LD2608184591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Mr. 'Ali Abu al-Raghib, Jordanian minister of trade and industry, stressed the importance of the expansion of ties between Iran and Jordan at a meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati today. Emphasizing the importance of economic ties among Islamic countries, Mr. Velayati described such ties as guaranteeing the interests of the world of Islam. He said the joint economic committee of Iran and Jordan is extremely valuable. Referring to the presence of a large number of Palestinians in Jordan, our country's foreign minister said that supporting the intifadah is an important duty of world Muslims. He expressed the hope that, with the cooperation and sympathy of Muslim countries, the banner of the fight to liberate Palestine will remain hoisted.

AFP Cites Source on Upcoming Talks With GCC

NC2608204691 Paris AFP in English 2027 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Tehran, Aug 26 (AFP)—Officials from Iran and the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are to meet next month on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session in New York, an official source said here Monday.

The meeting will focus on means of "developing and strengthening cooperation", he added.

Members of the GCC, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain, recently sent a letter to the Iranian government on future relations that was examined by Iran's highest ruling body, the supreme national security council. The letter, according to informed sources here, invited Iran to join the council and to be politically linked to any regional security structure.

Iran and the GCC were bitterly at odds during the Iran-Iraq war, in which the council backed Iraq. But relations improved dramatically when Iran joined the GCC in condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last year. [passage omitted]

Perez de Cuellar May Visit After Hostages Freed

AU2608133891 Paris AFP in English 1326 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Geneva, Aug 26 (AFP)—U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar said Monday [26 August] there was a possiblity he might go to Tehran but probably only after the hostage issue was resolved.

He said any such trip would be to continue talks on the peace settlement between Iran and Iraq after their eight-year war in the Gulf.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar did not rule out a forthcoming trip at the invitation of the Iranian Government. "It is not excluded but not in the framework of the hostages. I think that the hostage question will be solved before I go to Iran," he said.

Instead, his talks with Iranian leaders would focus on application of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598, which Iran accepted in 1988 and which had called for an immediate ceasefire in the fighting with Iraq.

Perez de Cuellar retured here Sunday from a vacation in Portugal to resume talks Monday on arranging the release of Middle East hostages. He was to meet with U.N. representative Giandomenico Picco, who was in Jerusalem last week.

The U.N. secretary general's spokesman recalled that Perez de Cuellar had repeatedly expressed hope that an agreement on the hostages' release would be reached by September.

Soviet Muslim Republics Talks in Tehran Suggested

LD2608112491 Tehran IRNA in English 0950 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 26, IRNA—An Iranian daily Monday called on leaders of the Soviet Muslim republics to put aside their differences and said Tehran might be a suitable venue for them to meet and adopt a common stance in the face of events now taking shape in the Soviet Union. Commenting on the recent developments in the Soviet Union, the editorial in the English daily TEHRAN TIMES referred to recognition of the Soviet Baltic Republic of Estonia by Iceland and Denmark. It also underlined the position of the Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin who "is not so keen about the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Soviet Union and favors granting independence to the republics."

"The position of the Soviet republics with Muslim populations, however, still remains uncertain," it stressed adding "they have exhibited inconsistent responses and shifting points of views during the recent events."

"This type of indecision and lack of determination at a time when the Soviet Union is going through one of its most historic periods is indeed very deplorable," the paper said and continued, "it would be a grave mistake if these republics were to remain passive towards the recent developments." Stressing that "Iran does not wish to interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union," the paper suggested, "Tehran might be a suitable venue for a meeting of the leaders of the Muslim republics."

* Skirmishes Between People, Security Forces

91AS1285C London KEYHAN in Persian 1 Aug 91 pp 1, 3, 7

[Text] Last week Tehran and several large cities in Iran, including Esfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz and Zahedan, witnessed violent clashes between the people and security forces.

In Tehran, following the boycott of the Vahed Bus Company by the people, a "national" movement that finally and for the first time forced the regime to back off and return the price of bus tickets to their previous level, once again on Monday, 29 July, heavy clashes occurred between the residents in the bazaar area and the guards.

The clashes began following a large fire in the bazaar, heightened by the rumor of arson by the "elements of the regime," and continued for several hours.

Eyewitnesses told KEYHAN in London in a telephone conversation that fires began simultaneously in several areas in the grand bazaar of Tehran, which strengthened the rumor that the elements of the regime had a hand in them, especially since for some time relations between the bazaar and Tehran City Hall, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Information (Security) over price hiking, hoarding, interference of the agents of the regime in the affairs of the merchants, nightly raids on the business centers, extreme insecurity and the threats of Khamenei and other officials as well as other problems have been in a very critical state.

Eyewitnesses said that the fire was so widespread that it could be seen clearly in the capital area. The efforts of fire fighters to put the fire out lasted several hours.

The Tehran bazaar, which is one of the largest traditional bazaars in the world, with its alleys, back alleys and small bazaars each of which specializes in certain goods or various guilds, at the beginning of the Islamic revolution strongly supported Ayatollah Khomeyni. But this honeymoon did not last long, and soon the relations between the bazaar, which has always played an important role in the Iranian economy, and the Islamic regime darkened such that a number of the wealthiest "bazaar merchants" who had spent several hundred million tomans towards the victory of the Islamic revolution fled abroad, and another group was arrested and all of their property confiscated.

During the leftist government of Mir Hoseyn, the Islamic Republic presented the bazaar as the center of anti-regime activities and the main factor in high prices and various shortages and a place of anti-Islamic conspiracies. Such suspicions against the bazaar merchants still persist.

In Esfahan

SALAM newspaper, which has been published for some time under the editorship of Musavi-Kho'iniha, reported in its 29 July issue that following severe clashes between the people and the revolution guards in the center of the city of Esfahan, 300 people were arrested.

According to this newspaper, which supports the views of the "extremist" faction and is considered an opponent of the regime, the clashes occurred when the angry people rose in support of several women who were insulted and assaulted by the guards.

The clashes occurred in the "Enqelab" Square of Esfahan in the course of which the people attacked several government and public offices and establishments as well as banks, broke the windows of stores and set several cars, stores and one or two government establishments on fire.

According to this newspaper, the clashes occurred when a number of Hezbollah guards attacked a group of women, wanting to arrest them for not observing Islamic standards.

Similar somewhat lighter and heavier clashes for similar reasons were reported in Tabriz and Shiraz, while in Zahedan the armed clashes that began between the guards and "Baluch guerrillas" some time ago in various areas of Baluchestan still continue.

The media of the Islamic Republic reported on Saturday, 27 July, that in the course of several coordinated operations about 1,000 people in various cities were arrested for selling and distributing narcotics. But informed sources in Tehran say that most of the arrests followed or occurred in the course of the clashes between the people and the revolution guards, all of which stem from the increasing high prices, unemployment, restrictions imposed by the regime, shortages of food, double-digit inflation, and so on.

Meanwhile, "Hasan Habibi," the first deputy president and official spokesman of the government, announced on Monday, 29 July, that within the framework of the government programs in order to "prevent waste and to save the national budget," from now on the holding of any seminar, conference or international meeting in Iran must absolutely be authorized by the president.

It should be pointed out that the holding of all sorts of conferences, anniversaries and seminars under various pretexts, such as the "international conference in support of the Islamic revolution and the people of Palestine," have become profitable for the officials of the regime. The ceremonies for the second anniversary of the death of Khomeyni alone cost the government about $200 million.

Nurbakhsh Holds Talks in PRC, Signs Accord

WA2608191191

For reportage on the visit to the PRC by Mohsen Nurbakhsh, minister of economic affairs and finance, including his talks with Premier Li Peng and Qian Qichen, state councillor and foreign minister, see the Near East & South Asia section of the 15 August China DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Pakistan

Comment on More Indian 'Atrocities' on Kashmiris

BK2708040891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Secretary General for Foreign Affairs Akram Zaki said the atrocities and the human rights violations committed by the Indian troops on the people in the occupied Kashmir increased. In an interview to (?National) Voice of Yugoslavia, he said more than 400,000 Indian troops are active in committing these atrocities in the occupied areas. Akram Zaki said Kashmir has been deprived of its right of self determination for more than four decades. He said India should adopt a reasonable stand on this issue and should honor its pledges in accordance with the UN resolutions.

He said the Islamic Conference Organization can help in enhancing cooperation among Muslim countries. Its three committees on economics, science and technology, and culture can play a vital role in forming a global system.

Indian Try To Capture Post 'Effectively' Foiled

BK2708025291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] An attempt by the Indian forces to capture a Pakistani post at Mirzapur in Punch sector was effectively foiled yesterday. A press release issued by the public relations department of the Army in Islamabad says an Indian troop contingent equal to the size of a company launched an unprovoked attack from the line

of control early in the morning yesterday to capture the post. The press release says before the attack, there were all sorts of heavy weapon fire from the Indian posts in the area. The attack was effectively repulsed, causing heavy casualties to the Indian troops. The Indian troops for some time have also been continuing unprovoked firing on the civilian population along the line of control, forcing a large number of citizens to vacate the area. The recent incident of attack from the line of control and the attempt to capture Pakistani post by India is regrettable. Pakistan has lodged a strong protest with the UN observers over this.

Foreign Secretary-Level Talks With India Slated

BK2508113691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] The next round of foreign secretary-level talks between Pakistan and India will be held from the 18th to the 21st of next month in Islamabad. This was stated by the foreign secretary, Mr. Shaharyar M. Khan, while briefing newsmen in Islamabad this afternoon about his visit to India as special envoy of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The talks, he said, will cover issues including Kashmir, Siachen as well as prime minister's proposal for nonproliferation regime in the region.

About the outcome of his meetings in New Delhi with the Indian prime minister and other leaders, he said the response was positive.

In reply to a question, he said the second round of trilateral talks on Afghan issue among Pakistan and Iran and groups of Afghan mojahedin will be held in Tehran from the 27th to the 29th of this month. Pakistan will be represented at the talks by a delegation led by the secretary general of foreign affairs.

Ordinance Amends Bank Nationalization Act

BK2608163291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The president promulgated the Bank Nationalization Third Amendment Ordinance 1991, amending the Bank Nationalization Act 1974. The ordinance empowers the federal government to sell all or any of its shares in the property of the bank and transfer the management and control of the bank, except the State Bank, to such persons and on such conditions as the federal government may determine. The ordinance also empowers the federal government to determine and lay down such terms and conditions under which shares of the bank will be sold and its management and control transferred.

Envoy Assured of Canadian Support on Arms Control

BK2408095291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] The Canadian governor general, Mr. Ramon Jean Hnatyshyn, has welcomed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's proposal on nuclear nonproliferation and arms control in the South Asian region. He was speaking at a ceremony at Ottawa while accepting credentials of the newly-appointed Pakistani high commissioner, Retired Air Chief Marshal Hakimullah, in Ottawa. The Canadian governor general said that his country would welcome any initiative that might lead to the signing of a nonproliferation agreement between India and Pakistan because, he said, such an agreement would not only benefit the people of the two countries, but also people in the region.

He also appreciated the government's steps for consolidation of the democratic process and liberalization of the economic system in Pakistan. He hoped that the new approach of the government would play a leading role in broadening economic ties between Pakistan and Canada.

Earlier, Pakistan's high commissioner presented his credentials and spoke about the present government's policies on economic reforms and the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

Article Views Prospects for Nuclear Plants

BK2308110791 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Aug 91 p 6

[Article by Farhatullah Babar]

[Text] Three important nuclear holdouts i.e. China, France and South Africa recently announced separately their decisions to join the international non-proliferation regime by agreeing to sign the controversial Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The treaty aimed at halting the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states was signed in 1970. It is due for a final review in 1995 when it will be decided by the signatories whether to scrap it or convert it into a permanent feature with or without modifications. Endorsing it at this time by both Beijing and Paris have lent the treaty great respectability as an arms control measure and added to the woes of Islamabad.

The foremost casualty of these developments are the two nuclear power plants promised to Pakistan by China and France. China offered to sell Pakistan a 300-MW power reactor during Prime Minister Li Peng's visit to Islamabad towards the end of 1989. This was followed by a pledge by President Mitterrand to supply a 900-MW power reactor when the French President visited Pakistan during early 90. Will China and France be willing to give Pakistan the promised plants even after they have signed the NPT? Indications are that they have already begun dragging their feet.

For the last over two decades China and France, both nuclear weapons powers, have denounced the NPT as discriminatory against the Third World, China even termed it as 'fraud' perpetrated against developing countries. The two nuclear aspirants of Latin America, i.e. Brazil and Argentina also recently formalised a regional agreement aimed at controlling the spread of nuclear weapons. All this is bound to increase Islamabad's vulnerability and isolation.

These developments have threatened the prospects of Pakistan acquiring the promised nuclear plants from China and France in more ways than one.

Article I of the NPT forbids a nuclear weapon state from transferring directly or indirectly to any non nuclear weapon state any material or technology "which will encourage or induce (the recipient) to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices".

The definition of a 'nuclear device' however has been left open. Recently while applying Symington Law against Pakistan the US State Department defined a 'device' to include even components and materials remotely connected with nuclear weapons. It is therefore not difficult to imagine that Washington will try to ensure that Paris and Beijing also adopt such stringent definition of a device and thereby deny Islamabad any nuclear assistance invoking Article I of the treaty.

The signs of a change in the thinking are already visible. The 'agreement in principle' to supply Pakistan nuclear power plants has been formalised neither by Paris nor by Beijing despite the fact that 18 months have passed since the agreement was arrived at. France is extremely reluctant to defy international public opinion particularly the one prevailing in the West against the spread of nuclear weapons. It also has a dubious record of having broken in late 70's its promise of supplying a reprocessing plant to Pakistan in return for US aid in the development of nuclear weapons technology system which enabled France to develop its multi-warhead system.

It should therefore come as no surprise if France once again under Washington's influence demands Pakistan to either sign the NPT or accept full scope safeguards on all its nuclear facilities in order to qualify for receiving the promised reactor.

Lack of progress so far on the Franco-Pakistan agreement has heightened this perception. Facing economic squeeze made more acute by the suspension of the US economic aid, Islamabad, cannot build the 2 billion dollar plant without external financial assistance. Paris is therefore employing the easiest expendient of insisting on cash payment for supplying the plant to scuttle the deal. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will be content with a stop over at Paris on his way to the UN General Assembly session next month to put up the political facade of continuing negotiations with France.

The same applies to the Pak-China deal but with a little difference. Islamabad is in dire need of a financial package, like the one recently concluded for financing the 850 million dollar Hub [dam] project, to acquire either of the two power reactors. While the French are simply unwilling to provide financial assistance, the Chinese are just unable to do do because of their own economic constraints. These constraints were highlighted by the failure of the Chinese firm Messrs China Liaoning to undertake last year the construction of Kharian-Pindi road under private financing scheme even though the letter of intent was issued to it in May 90.

Apart from threatening the reactor deals, pressure on Islamabad is also bound to increase to sign the NPT. Both China and France had symbolised the hopes and dreams of many Third World countries in their struggle against the unjust Treaty. These countries have now been abandoned and robbed of their argument that the NPT was so discriminatory that two nuclear weapons states had also refused to sign it and that more than half of mankind was opposed to it.

Such arguments will no longer hold valid. The INF treaty and the recent START agreement envisaging deep cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals of the two super powers has also knocked the bottom out of the argument that since the nuclear weapon state had not taken steps to honour their Treaty obligations of reducing nuclear stockpiles they were not justified in imposing controls on non-nuclear weapon states.

Where is Pakistan headed to? During the 90 elections the IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] brandished real or imaginary nuclear bombs at India and accused Benazir of a nuclear sell out. A victim of his own rhetoric Mr Nawaz Sharif is now faced with this dilemma: If he accepts the NPT he will be swept aside by domestic public opinion largely of his own making, but if he does not he may have to abandon the search for power reactors to meet energy needs and with it his dream of an industrial and technological revolution.

Sri Lanka

Chief LTTE Spy in Colombo Arrested

BK2608113091 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] The police have arrested the chief LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] spy in Colombo. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that this man (Nagulesaran) was arrested by detectives of Crime Detection Bureau and is now under detention. The sources said that (Nagulesaran) is 30 and senior member of the LTTE intelligence wing who had been sent down to Colombo from Velvettiturai, the home town of the Tiger leader, Prabhakaran. He had been in Colombo for the last two years locating and identifying targets for the LTTE, drawing up blue prints of the targets and all other necessary information. He had dispatched the necessary information to the LTTE leadership in Jaffna.

Maldive's Gayoom, Premadasa View Regional Issues

BK2408121391 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 24 Aug 91

[Text] Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom who was in Colombo on a two-day official visit left the island yesterday evening. The main objective of his visit was to discuss matters relating to revitalization of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] for more effective regional cooperation and collaboration. President Gayoom talked with President

Ranasinghe Premadasa at the presidential secretariat yesterday. The Maldivian president briefed President Ranasinghe Premadasa on the results of his consultations with other SAARC countries.

The two presidents agreed that these consultations would help promote the necessary consensus in the association to (?provide) a fresh impetus to SAARC. Such consultations would make SAARC a more effective instrument for the realization of the needs and aspirations of the people of South Asia.

The Sri Lankan president stated that all sectors of the society—state and private—are being encouraged and motivated to interact with their relevant counterparts in other SAARC countries. This is aimed at ensuring people's participation in SAARC. Also it would promote two people's contact and develop greater understanding at all levels. The president of Sri Lanka briefed the president of the Maldives on preparations being made for the summit in Colombo. The two leaders agreed to cooperate to make it a success.

The two leaders also discussed matters of bilateral interest, including the promotion of closer trading and commercial relations. The establishment of a Sri Lanka trade center in Male shortly and the possibility of the private sectors of the two countries establishing closer links were discussed. President Premadasa said that Sri Lanka was prepared to extend further assistance to the Maldives in the fields of education and training. He agreed to offer such training facilities in the fields of the coconut industry, tourism, fisheries, and medical research. A delegation of education officials from the Maldives will be visiting Sri Lanka soon to finalize the areas of collaboration. [Word indistinct] of employment opportunities for Sri Lankans in the Maldives was also discussed. President Ranasinghe Premadasa thanked President Gayoom for releasing all Sri Lankan fishermen who were apprehended for poaching in Maldivian waters. The quick releasing of the confiscated boats was also discussed.

The two leaders expressed their greater satisfaction with regard to the progress made between the two countries in all areas of bilateral relations. It was also decided that the agreement to consolidate and extend friendly relations and cooperation between Sri Lanka and the Maldives which was signed in 1987 be implemented.

Privatization, Freeing of Exchange Laws Reported

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[By Amal Jayasinghe]

[Text] Colombo, Aug 26 (AFP)—Sri Lanka is galloping towards privatisation with the state selling off dozens of poorly run enterprises in a bid to attract much needed foreign investment and revive its strife-battered economy.

About 38 government ventures, including transport, manufacturing and agricultural industries, will be sold to local and private firms by the end of the year, according to Sri Lankan Treasury and Industries Ministry officials handling the privatisation programme.

Economists estimate the Treasury will make nearly 25 million dollars from the sale, although the government has no official prediction.

Industries Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said foreign companies would be allowed to hold 60 percent or more of the privatised corporations but they must compete with the local private sector to buy a controlling interest.

Wickremesinghe denied that the government was under pressure from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to speed up the privatisation campaign known by the official euphemism—"peoplisation."

"It is easy for the government to work with the World Bank and the IMF because goals set by us coincide with their recommendations," Wickeremesinghe said in a recent interview.

The heavily debt-ridden bus transport sector, which was nationalised in the 1950's, is being given away to bus employees without the state making a cent.

On the other hand, more lucrative companies have been sold at a premium and more will come on the market shortly.

The government sold 60 percent of Ceylon Oxygen Co. to a Norwegian firm, gave 10 percent of its equity free to employees and offered the balance to the public at a premium of five rupees on a 10 rupee share.

The issue was hugely oversubscribed and Oxygen shares hit the tiny Colombo stock exchange at 125 rupees (nearly three dollars).

The opposition criticised the government for undervaluing Oxygen shares. But Wickremesinghe said the small fortunes the public made will be reinvested in more shares.

A loss-making textile mill was sold to an Indian company on similar terms and the 10 rupee share of that company is expected to begin trading next week. Brokers say they already have buying orders at 50 rupees a share.

Wickeremsinghe said of the government's privatisation strategy: "We begin by not having to pay for the loss-making companies. They have been a teriffic burden on the budget. (But) when they start making profits, they will have to pay taxes."

He said the privatisation program was stepped up this year after peace was restored in large parts of the country, except the northeast where Tamil guerrillas are fighting for a separate state.

Coupled with privatisation is the deregulation of the tight exchange policy to encourage foreign investment, especially in Colombo's stock market.

Since early this year, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka has been lifting restriction after restriction that inhibited the free flow of foreign exchange.

"We have gone more than half way in making the rupee fully convertible. Very soon all the restrictions will be removed," Wickeremesinghe said. Early this month, the Central Bank began selling gold for Sri Lankan rupees.

In an unprecedented move this month, locals were allowed to maintain foreign currency accounts free from tax. Earlier the tax-free foreign currency concession was available only to Sri Lankans who were employed abroad.

At the begining of the year, the Central Bank also allowed commercial banks to open Swiss accounts for both foreigners and locals. Foreign investors were also allowed to repatriate profits without restrictions.

Private sector economists believe the rapid liberalisation of exchange laws would have to be coupled with a devaluation of the rupee to prevent large-scale capital flight from the country.

However, Wickeremsinghe is optimistic.

"When people have confidence in our policies, the money that has already gone out of the country will start coming back," he said.

Officials say the local black market has already come to end.